

FRANK WILDMAN'S

Adventures on Land & Water.

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P R E F A C E.

It is very possible that, had I taken a leaf from the book of modern play-wrights, and “adapted” this little story, I might have rendered it even more interesting than it is in its present shape. But there were two reasons which caused me to refrain.

In the first place, it would, according to my ideas, be not exactly fair to treat the production of another man in such an unceremonious fashion ;—and then again there was a second, and more ignoble motive, namely, that Gerstaecker’s peculiar style has already become so familiar to English readers, that the attempt at deception would be too transparent.

I have, therefore, confined my alterations to a very limited field. I have ventured slightly to Anglicise the name of the hero ; I have toned down those passages in which there is any allusion to

religion ; and, finally, I have cut out a vast quantity of bad language, which Germans, like parrots, evince a peculiar aptitude in picking up.

• With these slight exceptions, I may assume the merit of having rendered a faithful translation of the original work.

L. W.

KENSINGTON, *March*. 1855.

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FRANK WILDMAN'S ADVENTURES.

CHAPTER I.

IN WHICH WE INTRODUCE THE READER TO THE HERO
OF THE TALE.

A German colony in America. The old miser and his foster son.
Frank's friends. A sorrowful parting.

AT no great distance from the little town of Hudson, on the river of the same name in the United States, a colony of Germans established themselves some twenty years ago, and through industry and perseverance nearly all of them enjoyed a certain degree of prosperity, stood in good odour with the Americans of the vicinity, and lived with them in peace and amity.

By the name of Americans we mean, in this instance, the white population of the country—that generation of Europeans, the produce of immigration, who had, long before our tale commences, driven the red natives and former owners of the soil into the wild deserts of the far West. These gentry term themselves, and somewhat pretentiously too, Americans *par excellence*, just as if America were not an immense territory, and that, in addition to this part of the whole—in addition to the United States—it did not contain Canada and Mexico, the whole western

coast range, Central and South America, with Brazil, Chili, Peru, the La Plata states. and several other smaller kingdoms.

We said just above, that *nearly* all the members of the small colony enjoyed a certain degree of prosperity, and it is to one of the minority that we must, in the first instance, introduce the reader.

This was a very aged man, the first settler in the neighbourhood, and who, if the neighbours could be believed, must be immensely rich, as he had sold the whole of his farm in small parcels for building purposes, and that too at an enormous price. He asserted, however, that he had lost the whole of his fortune in unsuccessful speculations, and he now lived in a poor little cabin, in such want and seclusion, that the neighbours at last—however much they might shake their heads over it at first—were forced to think that the man was really as poor as he stated.

Kaspar Rothhayn—for that was his name—thoroughly starved himself, in the true sense of the term. While his neighbours enjoyed—as is the custom in America—meat, and other nourishing articles of food, at breakfast, dinner, and supper, he chewed his dry bread, or, at the most, regaled himself with a thin water-gruel, so that the settlers more than once assembled and proposed to give him relief, for it seemed as if he was on the point of dying from want. In such cases, however, proofs to the contrary were strangely discovered; and there were men in the settlement who stated that old Rothhayn was richer than all of them put together, but that he had buried his money in iron pots, instead of letting it serve as a blessing to mankind, by displaying it in the bright

sunshine,—in a word, that he was the richest old miser the world ever saw.

This would have been all very well, if he had starved alone; in that case, the neighbours would, probably, not have troubled themselves much about him, for he was uncourteous and harsh to everybody, and at times folk really fancied that he even begrudged them the sunshine, which he was compelled to share with them. But he had a boy living with him, whose parents had died years before in America, and who now stood all alone in the world, and far from eating the bread of charity with the old miser, was forced to work from daybreak to night, while earning hardly and sourly enough, the few crumbs which the old man almost counted out to him daily, with many a bitter reproach.

By break of day he was obliged to be up and prepare their scanty meal; then start for the field, and cultivate the small stock of vegetables which they required for the bare support of existence; and then the old man was stern and unkind to him, allowed him no liberty, and scarcely any pleasure in the wide world.

The neighbours would gladly have taken the industrious lad, and paid him excellent wages for his labour; but when the old man perceived anything of the sort, he would become much kinder to him, would tell him that he must not leave him, as he was the sole support of his old age, and promised that when he died his boy should have all he had to leave—the little cabin and the garden.

Frank, that was the boy's name, was much too good tempered to bear any malice against the crabbed

old man, and *one* kind word generally dissipated all the painful and cruel reminiscences which former scenes with his guardian had evoked.

About two hundred yards from old Rothhayn's cabin, and only separated from it by a little wood, much overgrown with underwood, lay another little farm, which also belonged to a German, Wolfram by name. Old Wolfram was, in some measure, the counterpart of his neighbour Rothhayn, even if not so ~~so~~craving—or, if the neighbours were right—so rich as the latter; but he was ill-tempered and had scarce any friends, although it was a very pleasant custom in the settlement that the neighbours should visit each other at times, talk about their crops and manner of cultivation, and impart to one another many useful hints, which they had learned from the large and valuable volume of experience. And old Rothhayn he hated more than any one else.

Wolfram had his family—wife and child and old grandmother—living with him, and the child was a little girl—such a pretty, dear little creature as ever had the blue sky above, and the flower-enamelled earth beneath her; and the mother loved the little being more than herself, and nursed and cherished her like the apple of her eye. But the father did not make much of her, was often harsh and unkind to her, and frequently said that a girl was of no use, either in the forest or the field, with the axe or with the plough. But in this he was quite wrong, for Helen, though only nine years of age, helped actively in the house whenever she could, and as far as her strength permitted: she carded wool and

spun, and was never so pleased as when she could afford her parents any assistance.

Frank and Helen had not only been playmates from their earliest youth, but Wolfram's wife loved the boy for his quiet, regular behaviour, almost as much as if he were her own child. Nothing grieved her so much as to be obliged to see how badly the lad fared in the house of his old guardian, without her being able to do anything by which to improve his position. Old Wolfram, on the other hand, could not bear the lad, although he had never given him any occasion for his enmity; and this repugnance increased more and more, as he saw that his wife loved Frank, and he at last forbade the poor lad the house, which had lately become to him more than his own home. The poor boy could no longer visit his good mother, as he called Madame Wolfram; and he could only chatter with Helen for a quarter of an hour now and then, when he met her accidentally on the road, for if the father had noticed this after his prohibition, he would have been terribly angry.

Thus then the May month arrived, and with it the period at which we will commence our story, when Frank one morning met his little friend; but he could not speak with her, as her father was coming close behind her through the wood, and Helen only found time to whisper him that he must come that afternoon to their garden hedge, as she had something very sorrowful to tell him, and that she was going away to a large town.

Frank stood quite speechless from dismay, until old Wolfram's harsh greeting brought him again to his

senses. He crept home all confused, and did not attend when old Rothhayn abused him for staying away so long, and robbing him of his time; he only thought of the afternoon, when he would see his darling little Helen for the last time, and was glad when the old man sent him on an errand to the neighbouring town, which would give him leave of absence at least till evening. If he made haste, he could easily be back by the right time, and he really ran as if he had committed some bad action, and was trying to escape his own conscience—which, however, cannot be effected, not even if we were able to fly through the air.

Much sooner, then, than his guardian could have anticipated, he had returned; and when he bounded along the narrow path through the wood, which led to Master Wolfram's house, and met Helen at the garden gate, who stretched out her little hand to him sorrowfully, and said, "Good bye, Frank!"—his heart grew so heavy that the tears filled his eyes, and he would probably have cried bitterly, had he not been ashamed to let Helen see anything of the sort.

"I must go away from here, Frank," said the little girl; "I'm going to live with a relation at Rochester, and be sent to school; and when I'm grown up I shall come back.—Good bye, Frank, till then."

"Good bye, Helen!" Frank said, in reply; "but I'm very sorry you're going away. I've a great mind to run away too."

"Be a good boy, Frank," the little girl, however, said, and it was a pretty sight to see her advising a lad so much older than herself, "you will surely not leave the old man alone. My father often scolds me, even perhaps when I do not deserve it, but still he

loves me dearly, and I really believe I should die if any harm were to happen to him—and I'm certain that would be the case with your father if you left him. Still, I would not go away, unless my parents sent me," she added in a whisper. .

"But you are much better than I am, Helen," Frank said, "I will obey you, and when you come back, you shall hear how good I have been."

"When I come back, I'll bring you a present," said Helen. Frank smiled through his tears, for it seemed to him comical enough that the little girl meant to bring him, a great boy, something from town: still he squeezed her hand, and when she withdrew it and said good bye once more, promising that she would often think of him, he turned away from her and walked slowly into the wood, for he was crying bitterly, and he could not have repressed his tears, even if Helen had really laughed at them. But she did not laugh; she walked slowly home, and was very, very sorrowful—she did not know exactly why, for was she not to come back again, when she had grown a great girl!

CHAPTER II.

WHAT HAPPENED TO FRANK IN THE WOOD.

A surprise in the wood. The old man buries his money. The spy. Frank's awkward position and return home. Roth-hayn's despair. The night excursion. The lost treasure. Death of the old man.

FRANK walked, as we said before, very, very sorrowfully homewards. He paid no attention to the path, for he knew every bush, and as it occurred to him that it might be a little too early to present himself before his father, for he had run at a great speed, he seated himself on a fallen tree beneath the fragrant bushes—and it did him an immensity of good, to be *able to think here, without fear of interruption, over all that now lay so heavy on his heart.*

He had been seated here for about an hour, and the sun had sunk deep in the west. In America, however, the twilight is remarkably short, and night follows close upon the actual sunset: he dared not stay out long after dark, as his foster-father would be angry with him; and he was just rising to return home, when he heard a rustling, and directly afterwards heavy footsteps in the yellow fallen leaves, drawing nearer and nearer.

At first he was about to go away, not caring whether any one saw him here, when suddenly he remembered that the road to Hudson was in exactly the opposite direction from this wood; and if his guardian heard that he had been wandering about

here, he would receive harsh words, perchance blows—and Frank feared the *disgrace* of a blow, more than the severest treatment and punishment. He, therefore, remained quietly seated beneath the shade of the dense bushes, intending to await the passing of the accidental wayfarer, when he recognised through a small clearing, his guardian, who came panting on, with a spade in his hand, and, a small, but apparently very heavy, bag on his shoulder. He often stopped, either to rest himself or to listen, for he turned his head cautiously in every direction, and then continued his progress, directly toward Frank.

He had already come so near, that Frank was on the point of stepping forward and giving up himself unconditionally to the old man—for he believed, and not incorrectly, that it would be better to appear than be discovered here—when old Rothhayn suddenly stopped, *leaned his spade against a tree, and cautiously lifted the bag from his shoulder on to the ground, as it seemed, with the exertion of his utmost strength.* It sounded exactly as if there were money in it, and Frank started at the sound—he did not know precisely why.

Rothhayn allowed himself no time for rest, but had hardly laid his tinkling burden on the ground, ere he first listened cautiously for any suspicious sound, and then dug a narrow, but deep hole, in which he thrust the bag, and carefully stamped down the earth again. When this was done, he collected all the little clods of earth, as far as the darkness allowed him, which lay around, and might betray the fact that the ground had been recently disturbed. Then, drawing a couple of boughs over the spot, and destroying every trace

with the leaves, he shouldered his spade once more, and crept as quickly as he could home from the gloomy shade of the wood, for he was frightened at night even to cross the threshold of his door, and nothing would have induced him to go through the wood in the dark.

“What could the old man have buried there?” thought Frank, and remained motionless from surprise, long after the steps had died away. “Money?—it sounded like it; but, gracious! if he had so much money in copper cents, he would never starve himself so. Nails?—but then, why should he want to bury them so secretly—nobody would steal them from him.”

Frank rubbed his forehead, and could not possibly account for the circumstance, when he suddenly fancied he again heard a rustling, and, on looking up, he had almost cried aloud from surprise; for, on the same spot where his guardian had just been digging, now stood no one else than Wolfram, Helen's father, regarding the spot attentively and the trees around; and it was easy of recognition, for a dead tree, which lay there, served as an excellent mark. When he had noted all carefully, he crept away into a thick bush, and Frank could distinctly hear him retiring slowly and as quietly as possible.

Frank was petrified with surprise, and at one moment was almost inclined to jump out and tell the man that he had seen him, when the fear he always felt of old Wolfram restrained him. What could he have said either, if the latter had asked him how he came to be there, and what he was doing at night in the wood? At last Frank sprang up in terror, and the

stealthy behaviour of the two old men, who detested *one another so cordially, made him feel so uncomfortable, that he seized his cap, and bounded homewards through the wood, as fast as his legs would carry him.*

On arriving at a short distance from the house, he hesitated ere he entered it, until it was perfectly dark : for he felt so excited, that he fancied the old man must notice directly that something extraordinary had happened to him. And then, too, he did not really know what to do, whether to confess voluntarily what he had seen, or whether it would be better not to trouble himself about it, and so at least escape any inquiry as to what had taken him at such an unusual hour to such an unusual spot. His good, upright heart, however, finally gained the victory over all apprehensions about what might happen to himself; and when he at last crossed the threshold, whose joyless sanctuary he called his home, he had firmly determined on confessing everything to the old man. He had done nothing wrong, and, consequently, had no cause to feel ashamed, or shun the light.

And yet he was compelled to force himself to execute this praiseworthy design, for old Rothhiayn was, on this evening, more quarrelsome than ever; would scarcely hear how he had executed his commission at Hudson—for he had only sent him there to get him out of the way while he went to the wood—and then ordered him to cut a piece of bread for supper and go to bed.

Frank, though usually obeying every command so dutifully, hesitated—his heart beat audibly, and he knew not how to begin, until the old man at last

addressed him angrily, and he saw that excuses and apologies would no longer avail him. But he had scarce mentioned that evening, and that he had been in the wood and had seen something, when old Rothhayn suddenly rushed at him with a fixed, horrified glance, seized him by the collar, and poured out such a flood of objurgations and questions, that Frank could not at first get a chance of speaking, and only the more confused the half-raving man by his partial revelations.

With immense difficulty Rothhayn at length comprehended the meaning of the whole, that he had not only had witnesses of his so carefully executed stratagem, but that some one was still watching—and his hair stood on end at the thought—to rob him. Frank was no longer in doubt either as to what the buried object was, for the miser rushed frantically up and down the little room, tore his hair, and lamented that all which he had been able to save by a life of self-denial had fallen into the hands of a robber; for Frank could not find the heart to mention the name of Helen's father, though burdened with such a heavy cause of suspicion. At last, however, being tormented with the idea that this man might have meant harm, and that it could not have been accident alone, that had brought him so secretly and cautiously into the wood, Frank advised his foster-father that it would be better to go back directly and secure the buried treasure, than leave it longer exposed to such a risk; and he even offered to accompany him. The old man, however, at first rejected this offer, for two reasons.

Above all, he distrusted the boy, who, he thought,

might have formed a design to get possession of his treasure, and now wished to discover the exact spot. It is the curse of all bad men to see, in every one that crosses their path, the reflected image of their own heart, and to pass their days in fear and suspicion; while the good man trustfully looks in the face of every stranger, and his path is strewn with flowers, that of the other man is beset with thorns. And then, again, even the hidden treasure was hardly a sufficient motive to expel the fear which the foolish old man entertained of the gloomy wood.

He was not afraid of ghosts—at least he said so, and often ridiculed such terrors;—he knew, too, that the little wood could not serve as a hiding-place for any dangerous robber; but something in his bosom drove the blood in an icy stream back to his heart, when he found himself alone in the dark, and the consciousness that he had not acted in a way which he could account for hereafter caused him, probably, to fear on earth that which men usually await before the throne of the Almighty.

Frank, at first, stood all amazed before the old man, whom he had never seen in such a fearful and unnatural state of excitement, and quite forgot to ask him how he had obtained this large sum of money so suddenly. But when the first excitement was passed, and the old man began to perceive that there was really not much time to lose if he wished to save his money, the fear of the loss grew more powerful than that of any evil spirits. So, seizing the lad's arm, with the spade in his hand, and a large knife in his waist-belt with which he meant to defend himself—he did not know against whom—he tottered in

feverish haste toward the wood, where he had buried his treasure in such an insecure place of concealment.

On the road, too, and for the first time in his life that he had deigned to address the boy on such a subject, he told him in a whispering, hoarse voice—he only spoke that it might not feel so horribly silent all around,—that he intended to sell his little house, as *it cost him too much money to keep it up, and take a room in some private dwelling*. He had, therefore, buried his so carefully-acquired fortune—a bag of copper—without in the wood, for men were wicked, and confidence was no longer to be placed in any one.

Frank spoke not a word, but his heart ached when he heard the old man talking in this strain, and he only walked on the quicker, in order to reach their destination as soon as possible. Old Rothhayn seemed to have grown a little calmer through the walk and conversation, or else had become still more frightened, for he did not say much, but frequently stopped, and peered out into the darkness. Nothing, however, was to be heard there, save the melancholy, complaining, cry of the whip-poor-will, a species of small night swallow, or the fearfully-sounding to-whoo of the owl, which, startled by the unusual visitors, fluttered deeper into the wood to recommence its concert.

Frank, however, was perfectly acquainted with his road; there was scarcely a hollow or fallen tree which he could not recognise—many of them he had himself felled,—and so he walked on confidently in this apparent labyrinth, until they reached the little clearing where he had been sitting that evening, and had been

an involuntary witness of the concealment of the money.

"Here is the place," the boy said suddenly; and the old man trembled in all his limbs at these words.

"Where—where?" he cried, and did not at first recognise the place which he had chosen, from its being, as he fancied, so secret and secure. Soon, however, he perceived against the bright, starry sky, the old withered tree, which stretched out its sapless branches like gigantic arms and claws; but, at the same time, feeling among the roots with his trembling hands, he uttered a fearful yell; the hole was open, the wood he had drawn over it removed, the earth had been dug out, and the money had disappeared.

"Gone, gone, gone—all gone!" he shouted, throwing himself frantically on the ground, and tearing his hair. "Gone! my all, my life's blood and joy! my gold, my gold, my gold!—But you know where it is." He then sprang up suddenly, and flew at the horrified lad's throat, which he clutched with his bony fingers; "You must confess who stole it, even if I must drag out the secret from you with your life."

Frank required all his strength to liberate himself from the madman, for he was almost strangled; but he did *not* confess who the man was he had seen, for he could not bear to betray the father of his little Helen, even though he was inclined to shed tears of blood at the thought that he could be such a dreadfully bad man. "I believe I should die if any harm happened to him," she had said, and these words ever sounded in his ears; he did not hear anything the frenzied old man shouted.

Rothhayn's strength, however, soon deserted him ; fear, fury, despair, with the unusual exertion during the day, might certainly have done their part ; but he suddenly loosed his hold of the boy, tottered back a few steps, and then fell senseless to the ground.

Frank attempted to bear him home, but for that he was too weak ; he then fetched some water in his cap, bathed his temples with it, gave him a little to drink, and brought him to his senses, so that he rose *and slowly walked homewards*. But he had scarce recovered sufficiently to realise the loss he had sustained than his frenzy recommenced. He accused Frank of the robbery, declared that he would give him in charge the next day, and force him to reveal his accomplices, and uttered such terrible blasphemy at the same time, that Frank at last felt quite alarmed. He would have summoned assistance, but the old man would not let him leave the house ; and while he still yelled and complained, and cursed and blasphemed, his face grew gradually paler, his eye more glassy, his veins swelled as if about to burst, and when he threw himself once again on the ground, tearing his hair and entwining his bony fingers, he suddenly sprang up, uttered a fearful yell, and fell back, his whole length, upon the ground.

He was dead—and as Frank bent over him, and tried to recal him to life, and the old man became colder and colder under his hands, at length he comprehended that all help was here fruitless, and God had summoned the old man before his judgment-seat ; but that himself was left destitute in the world, and could wander whither he listed, with his deep, bitter sorrow gnawing at his heart.

- It is wonderful to notice how equally on this earth, sorrows, sufferings, and pleasures are allotted to us poor mortals, each according to his strength. The young child experiences, in proportion to its own little heart, the same grief about a broken toy, as the man, whose life's hopes have been annihilated—at the moment, at least, it feels it equally deeply. The schoolboy, who has not learned his lesson, frequently stands—though his heart may be so pure and innocent—with the same *fear, the same beating heart, before his frowning teacher, as the grown-up criminal before his judge.* With our years our strength increases; but our sorrows do not decrease—they grow with them. The broken toy is succeeded by the punishment of the school-master, the latter by the first parting from home; and, as we grow older, ah! then sorrows come in battalions, and we consider each the worst, with which God has chastened us, until the succeeding one teaches us that we were mistaken. Sorrows resemble the waves, which raise their crests menacingly against the sailor: those nearest ever appear the largest, and most dangerous—further back, they become smaller and smaller—until, in the extreme distance, the sea seems calm and gentle; and yet they are all equally menacing and tremendous, and our vessel of life, guided by God's hand, glides gently and safely over them.

CHAPTER III.

HOW FRANK WENT OUT INTO THE WORLD TO SEEK
HIS FORTUNE, AND WHAT HE FOUND.

Frank's prospects. His determination to seek his fortune. Meeting with a stranger. A proposition. Shepherds real and ideal. Old Tom Brendall. Hey for Brazil!

WHEN we sit cozily and quietly in our little room at home, and look out of the window, thoughts frequently occur to us of foreign parts—of the wide, wide world, how things may look out there, and what folk are doing in them. And then perhaps may recur to us what we have read and heard about them—that the persons there are cold and inhospitable, when we do not bring pockets full of money with us—that each retires into his house, like a snail into its shell, and will leave us standing in the street with our thoughts and cares. We gaze then, perchance, at the blue mountains on the horizon, so far away that they can scarcely be distinguished from the azure sky stretched out above them, and think that this chilling and foreign world commences there—there we should feel solitary and desolate, while here we know every tree, every roof, and *feel* ourselves at home in each street and lane.

We do not at such time remember generally, that this world, fancied so remote, commences with the first footstep we take from our own door—that it often lies on this side of that blossom-covered tree, whose fragrance the evening breeze is wafting into our study.

Circumstances may arise in which the ground really disappears from beneath our feet, and where we enter a strange world in our own home, and in those rooms which witnessed the frolics of our youth, and we fly in terror and despair from the places which have hitherto been so dear and sweet to us, because the happy time is past, and the present has become so mournful.

It was a similar feeling that assailed Frank Wildman's heart, when he cut his pilgrim's staff out of a young hickory bush, and turned his face once again towards the spot which till now had been his home. He had not experienced much happiness there; no loving mother had fondled and cared for him, no kind paternal hand had indicated to him the path on which he would have to perform his life's pilgrimage; he left no brother or sister behind in the desolate rooms—only an old man, who had frequently been harsh, unkind, and unjust to him. But the old man now lay in there stark and dead upon his hard couch—the house which had hitherto afforded him a shelter was sold, for the news of the death had scarce become known ere the purchaser arrived. Frank now clearly understood why the old man had buried his money in the wood, and felt that, even before he had crossed the threshold, he stood alone and friendless in the wide world.

Many of the neighbours certainly offered to take him into their service—they knew what a good workman he was—but he declined their offers. After what had happened, he would not have remained in the settlement, if they had offered him the daintiest luxuries served up on gold plate.

The jury had brought in a verdict of "Died of apoplexy," but no one knew what had caused it; and Frank, who could have furnished an explanation, thought of his poor Helen, and said not a word. With his little bundle he walked forth, and when he reached the wood, from whose verge he could survey his former home for the last time, he seated himself on a stone, and looked for a long time across at the little gloomy cabin, till the heavy tears rolled down his pallid cheeks.

But all has its season—grief and joy, sorrow and mourning; and when the boy had cried heartily, and so cleansed his bosom from all that oppressed it,—and which he really did not yet comprehend,—he rose, threw his bundle once more on his shoulder, and without casting another glance back, walked boldly onwards, when the novelty that surrounded him soon drove the melancholy pictures from his mind, and dried the tears on his cheeks.

But whither should he go? He had started from the village with no settled determination; he only wanted to be away from it, he cared not where, so that he left it far behind him. But as he was now on a high road, he looked around him to see whither it led, and seemed eventually quite satisfied with his choice, when he found that he had the beautiful River Hudson at his side, and was following its course toward the sea.

As the boats with their snowy sails glided athwart the sun-glistening river, what a soft and grateful scene it presented, especially when the dusty road ran along by its side!

"I wish I could sail too, on board such a vessel!"

— he said, half aloud to himself; and he started in surprise, when a voice close beside him responded to the scarcely expressed wish with a hearty, “And why not?” Frank had been so occupied with gazing on the various vessels, that he had not noticed a seafaring man leaning against a young oak by the roadside, and, as it seemed, examining, with a short telescope he held in his hand, the vessels sailing up and down the river, or lying at anchor by the different wharves.

“And why not, my boy?” the man repeated, when Frank stopped and looked up in his face; “if a man feels a longing for salt water, he must not try to conquer his nature, and crawl about on dry land; that’s never any good.”

“Yes, but I only meant to sail down the river, so that I might get on quicker,” said the boy.

“Only sail as a passenger?” the seaman exclaimed, and threw up his head contemptuously—for sailors generally detest passengers, who only cause them trouble and annoyance, and understand nothing about the sea—“merely as a passenger? hang it! I should have taken you for something better. What countryman are you?”

“A German,” said Frank.

“But you speak good English.”

“I came over here with my parents when quite young.”

“And your parents?” inquired the seaman, who seemed to take an interest in the lad.

“Are both dead, long ago,” said Frank, mournfully.

“And they treated you badly at home, and you want to see the world? Don’t know, I suppose, where

to go to?" asked the seaman again, and walking up to Frank, who bowed his head sorrowfully, he laid his hand on his shoulder.

The boy sighed, for the stranger's word struck a sorrowful chord, but the sailor, who fancied his suppositions confirmed by it, continued laughingly,

"Head up, my boy, head up: sunshine always comes after a storm, is a good old proverb, and it's a bad wind that blows no one any good. Do you see that pretty little vessel at anchor there—the one with the white stripe. You can sail aboard her, if you like, and not as a dirty passenger, but as one of the crew, as a brave sailor, which, I expect, some of these days you will be."

"But I understand nothing about the sea," said Frank, half frightened and half pleased; for when we are out in the world among strangers, the slightest offer of employment or shelter affords us a species of self-confidence and satisfaction. But here was opened to the lad a prospect of gain, a certainty of a vocation, of which, it is true, he had more than once thought, and which possesses so much attraction, especially for a youthful mind.

It is always the case with us poor mortals—generally when we are young, but at times in our riper years—that we only see the bright side of any distant employment, and long to be within its sphere. How idyllically, for instance, has a pastoral life always been represented! Under the idea of an arcadian shepherd we picture to ourselves a young and very handsome man, who, in a straw hat and streamers, with the pastoral staff in his hand, reclines on a grassy bank, playing the flute or clarionet. Shepherdesses we

only have an opportunity of seeing at masked balls and in pictures, in which they wear gay and short dresses, are elegant beings, with straw hats and ribbons, and a little happy frolicking dog by their side: they wear satin shoes, and either weave garlands, or pluck a flower to pieces. The only shepherdess I ever really saw in my life I found in Australia, and she was very fat, had on a cotton cloak, an old weatherbeaten man's hat, thick cow-hide shoes, and carried an umbrella instead of a crook.

Instead of blowing the flute, *our* shepherds knit blue woollen stockings, and probably earn the most wearisome bread of any men in the whole world; for they lie the whole day on the various troughs or frontier stones, and wait till their sheep have eaten their fill.

So it is with the sea;—when we stand on the shore, see the glistening sails skimming the wide blue expanse, and possess a slight power of imagination, so that we can fancy the graceful boat stopping in far distant waters, on the palm-shadowed coasts of the South-Sea Islands—see the brown Indians flocking up curiously, and exchanging precious rarities for iron nails and pieces of looking-glass—then our hearts flutter, and we say to ourselves in a gentle whisper, “Oh! would I could sail across the wide, open sea, to those lovely islands! Oh! how glorious must it be to dance on the heaving waves!”—But on a nearer view, oh! all that becomes contracted, and the bright side of a sailor's life only resembles at last the little glow-worms in a dark bush; or the salt water itself, which on a dark night glistens and sparkles beneath us, but, when brought on deck in a bucket, only emits

a few faint scintillations. The stateliness of the ship is soon lost on board in a most unpleasant scent of tar, and an inextricable confusion of ropes and spars, which at first appear to the landsman like an entangled ball of string; and the heaving of the vessel—oh! how wretched and miserable it makes him feel, and how he longs to be back again on land, to be able to admire the majesty of the sea from *terra firma*.

Frank, however, saw nothing of this back-ground; the sea appeared to him one huge, strange, and yet unsolved enigma; and the more mysterious the confusion of spars and ropes seemed to him, the more he felt attracted to try his strength upon them, and to rush forth with swelling sails—he cared not whither. His “I understand nothing of the sea” was, consequently, a partial assent, though he was unconscious of it.

“You’ll soon learn, my boy!” the sailor laughed, and tapped him again on the shoulder, somewhat more roughly than on the previous occasion; “you’ll soon learn. Others have come, who had less mother-wit than you, and knew as little of salt water, and they have grown as hearty tars as ever manned a ship. There’s nothing which cannot be learned, and it’s no art to be a sailor, though at starting you must catch hold with both hands. But we lead a jolly, free life, on the blue water out there; a life which will please you, and when you’ve been half a year with us, I don’t believe you’d go on firm land again, to cut down trees and turn up the soil, if they offered you bags of money,—so, will you agree?”

Frank looked in the man’s face, and regarded him for the first time more closely; for the vessel itself, to which he had been so suddenly invited to trust his

future destiny, had, till now, almost exclusively commanded his attention.

He was a broad-shouldered, short man, with brown curly hair, and muscular arms and hands: he was dressed in the usual sailor's garb, a blue jacket, wide white trousers, and a low broad-brimmed straw hat, from which a black ribbon fluttered. His broad face, too, wore an expression of straight-forwardness and goodhumour, but his overhanging eyebrows imparted to it a look of craftiness and almost of treachery. •

Frank himself was, however, much too open and honest to suspect any one of being different from himself. The man certainly meant honestly by him, for, of what advantage would deceit be to him? He perceived, too, that the sailor was quietly smiling at his hesitation, and fancied, perhaps, he was afraid:—no, in truth, the man of the waves should not imagine that he could be frightened at anything, and his determination was formed.

“Done!” he cried, and took the sailor's hand. “I'll be a sailor, and a good one too, and will go to sea whenever you like; I've nothing to wait for on land:” he then added, in a gentler tone, “and the sooner we are off the better.”

“Halloo! is there any one after you, my boy?” laughed the other, as he shook his hand heartily, or, at least roughly—two things which are often confounded in this world; “is stern justice at your heels, or a severe master, whom you've given leg bail?—never fear, my boy, I'll get you out of it, even if the whole city of New York was after you. Old Tom Brendall——”

“No, no, no!” Frank cried, who had not been

able to speak before, and was now seriously alarmed lest his new principal might consider him a wicked boy, although that did not appear to trouble him much; "no, I have committed no crime, and have run away from nobody; I can look everybody boldly in the face!"

"Indeed!" said the sailor, rather anxiously, and looked searchingly in his face, as if trying to see to his very heart; but Frank bore his glance, and his bright blue eye was fixed firmly and confidently on the sailor's swarthy countenance.

"All right, then, my boy!" Tom Brendall at length remarked, "that was said honestly and bravely, and I hope that we shall be good friends. But now, come," he added, as he held his telescope once again to his eye, and quickly examined the surrounding country. "Come, it's time for us to weigh anchor, for my mate has twice given me the signal to come aboard: and what's your name?"

"Frank Wildman!"

"Frank!—a grand name, indeed!" laughed the Yankee; "suppose we call you Bill, that sounds better."

"I would rather be called by my proper name," Frank replied.

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the seaman, "they might call me what they liked, except too late for dinner—but there's the signal again, and as dinner is ready, we won't stop any longer. So now, Frank, take a good look at the country around us, for we shall for a long while have nothing but the blue sea to look at, till we make the land again."

"And where are we bound for?" Frank asked with very pardonable curiosity.

“For Brazil!” was the reply, and the old man walked with a merry whistle down the hill towards the schooner, not to let his dinner get cold.

To Brazil! it was just as if an electric spark had shot through the boy's limbs, on hearing that word. He had had at home an old book, which described a voyage to Brazil, and adventures, met with or invented, in that country, and if there was any part of the world which he had painted in all the glowing colours a youthful fancy summons up, it was this. And now, in the same hour, when he had stood desponding on the threshold of his home, and knew not where to bend his steps—accident led him—but no, it could not be accident, it must be destiny—his good fortune led him gently and softly to a spot which he had longed to visit from his earliest youth, and the future lay expanded before him, as bright and warm as it had appeared to him but a few hours before overcast and gloomy. He, therefore, followed his leader with light steps down the slope, and soon after was carried aboard the schooner, which, though not very large, was roomy and handsome.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SOCIETY AND OCCUPATION FRANK FOUND IN
HIS NEW HOME.

Introduction to the mate of the *Turtledove*. Frank has his new duties explained to him. The American character. Description of the crew. The pleasures of the ocean. Caesar, the black cook. Life on board a ship. Arrival in Brazil.

"HALLOO, captain, what young lubber is that you're bringing aboard?" was the first greeting that echoed across the deck—almost before the new comrade had planted his foot on the first plank. Frank looked up in alarm, and the face which belonged to this address in no way seemed to tone down the sharp and almost contemptuous meaning that lay in these coarse words. The voice belonged to a brawny sun-burnt man, whose black, curly, almost woolly, hair gave him the appearance of a Mulatto. His eyes were deep set in their cavities; his thin lips were now parted by a species of grin, which did not render his face any the more pleasing, and displayed two rows of brilliantly white teeth; while his naked, muscular, arm, with a pair of fists attached, which looked as if they could fell an ox at a single blow, were covered with hair, like a bear's paw.

Lightly dressed, like the other sailors who were lounging on deck, he only wore a shirt and trowsers of thin cotton, with a red woollen waistcoat; on his head a low-crowned, oil-skin covered, straw hat, and had neither shoes nor stockings on; but he appeared

to address the captain with a certain degree of familiarity, and to be of higher rank than the rest, which was proved by his occupation of the quarter-deck. He was leaning with both his arms on the taffrail, and moving a plug of tobacco from one cheek to the other, which was no additional ornament to his fearfully ugly face.

"A young recruit, who, I hope, will do us honour, Blighton," said Tom Brendall, or the captain, as we shall in future call him for brevity; "he is tired of life ashore, and wants to see strange countries and people."

"And we are going to undertake his education, eh?" said Mr. Blighton, and a broad grin spread across his face.

"We'll do our best, Blighton," laughed the captain; "but now to work: have the crew dined?"

"An hour ago!" said the mate, for Mister Blighton occupied this post on board the *Turtledove*.

"Well, then, let them weigh anchor and employ the slight breeze there is to run down the river. We will in the meantime go below and dine, and you, Frank, will come with us to-day; I will explain to you what you will have to do, for you will be our steward or cabin-boy. Presently you can take charge of the glasses and plates the other scoundrel before you has not broken, and commence your duties as soon as you like. As for your wages, we will not settle that just at present; if we agree, I give you my word that you will be satisfied, and if we don't agree, why then you won't have to repent the time you spent on board the *Turtledove*, and we shall part, I hope, as good friends as we met."

. Frank was soon at work: he took his little bundle

below, where the captain showed him his bunk, and after a good dinner, consisting of every possible dainty, the black cook, whose name was Cæsar, and who had lately been performing the functions of steward, was ordered to initiate him into the mysteries of his art—that is, show him, where all the various provisions and liquids were stowed away in the most wonderful little corners and lockers, whose doors were in the flooring, in the deck overhead, and frequently in the bulkheads. His work was not very laborious—he only had to wait in the cabin, keep the crockery clean and tidy, as well as an account of what was expended, for which purpose all the bottled wine and brandy, as well as boxes of preserved vegetables and meat, were entrusted to him. But the smell of tar was at first rather unpleasant, as well as sleeping in the narrow, confined bunk, after being used to the airy rooms ashore, and on the first evening he took his bed, consisting of a moss-filled mattress, on deck. But at midnight he was forced to retire much quicker than he had come up, for it suddenly began to rain, as if a cloud had burst, and the deck was flooded.

The first few days passed very pleasantly, and the consciousness of having entered on a new mode of life, and of now standing in some measure independent in the world, helped him over the few unpleasantnesses of his position, such as confined space, the smell of tar, and the society around him, which did not please him quite so well as he had at first fancied,—let him ascribe as much as he liked to the novelty of his position.

The skipper, though somewhat rough and coarse,

seemed to be the best of the whole crew; he was a true Yankee, though not so long and thin as these gentry generally are; but, as already stated, somewhat short and stout: a seaman certainly by trade, but not for a moment belying the trader, who tries to derive the quickest and greatest possible profit from everything that offers; and he in no way disgraced the speculative, at times over-speculative, and regardless character of his countrymen.

But you must not be surprised, dear reader, that Frank, after so short a stay on board, had already formed such a comprehensive opinion of the character of his captain. He belonged to a class of men with whom Frank had frequently come in contact on the Hudson, and who, dispersed over all the States, always remain the same, whether piloting a ship from one port to another, or carrying clocks into the most distant territories of the West in their little waggons; whether they deal in pills and salves, or silver spoons. This species of Yankee never denies the breed; their character is, as it were, formed in one mould, and of such an elastic nature, that if held down ten times in succession, it always springs up again as fresh as ever, and the person we are describing recommences life, after a blow which would have eternally annihilated a quieter man, with such active courage as if, still a young man, he were entering on life with the fairest prospects. This is an elasticity of temperament which, if directed to good, can bring forth the fairest fruit, but if diverted to the wrong path, is capable of driving a man to the most horrible deeds, for which he ever finds a sufficient palliative in his own mind. Firm and undaunted, but also perfectly calm and never

tormented by the stings of conscience, he goes through life till he has gained his terrestrial object—a large fortune and the prospect of ending his days as a gentleman, perhaps as the patron and supporter of some religious sect.

Frank, however, could not so rapidly form his opinion of the mate, who united with his rough seaman's nature so much cunning and wickedness—and Frank could not help disliking the man from their first meeting—and, at the same time treated him at one moment so kindly and directly afterwards so contemptuously, that he could not reckon him up, and changed his opinion hourly, as to whether he was his friend or foe. At any rate, the young fellow felt that it would not require much to enkindle a tremendous enmity, and he therefore determined very sensibly to avoid most carefully everything that might lead to it; for the mate is the second personage on board a vessel, and even if he could not do him much good, he could cause him an immensity of harm.

The rest of the crew consisted of rough fellows, men from the lowest dregs of society, and that is saying a good deal in America, where, in addition to the thousands of worthy and honest workmen or well-to-do farmers, who annually immigrate, every country of the world sends a portion of its *canaille* over, who are considered honest and respectable, until the old sore breaks out again, and fresh crimes bring generally a severe punishment on the offender.

Here on board of the *Turtledove* an extract of all such elements seemed to be collected, for a greater number of hang-dog faces Frank had never before seen in so small a space. They were not all Ameri-

cans, for there were a couple of Irishmen, a Scotchman, and three Spaniards among them. They were, he was glad to find, very friendly with him, and, however much they might curse one another, no one ever uttered a harsh word to Frank. The honest boy at first ascribed this solely to their good-temper—the roughest men have often the best hearts, and it would be wrong to judge of a man by the garb in which he clothes his thoughts. But here, selfishness seemed rather to be the motive than anything else, for *he* had the distribution of the grog, and the person intrusted with this duty always plays an important part among the crew on board a vessel. In addition, the steward has it in his power, especially on long voyages, to procure the crew a variety of comforts; then why should they not be at least on friendly terms with him?

Frank, however, knew but little or nothing at all of all this: he was satisfied, after the mate had been abusing him for half-an-hour at a stretch, in hearing a couple of pleasant words, and seeing smooth faces in the fore-castle—he did not ask their cause.

The *Turtledove* appeared to be in considerable hurry though, for she only stopped long enough in New York to have her papers put in order, and then stood immediately out to sea.

Of the first eight days of their voyage Frank knew nothing; he remembered that they had very rough weather at starting, and that the sea had run very high, but that was all. Afterwards, dark pictures rose before him,—how he had been kicked about on deck by the mate, had lain miserably in every corner of the schooner, and wished himself dead. It seemed

to him, that one day he had fallen down the companion with a basket of plates, and had remained lying where he fell: then, that he had afterwards gone forwards, and had been washed back by a wave. But all this floated in hazy, obscure pictures before his mind, and the misery of the week, during which the sea-sickness had seized upon him and shaken him with all its strength, could not be described.

During this time the cook was obliged to perform his duties, for, although the mate had at first tried to compel him to keep on his feet, it was at last of no use, especially when the poor boy came in contact with provisions.

The cook was a light-coloured mulatto, with curly, woolly hair, and a perfect negro physiognomy. Proud of his origin, he, in fact, despised nothing so much as a real negro, whom he regarded more as a brute than a human being, and, in consequence, was often having angry quarrels with one of the sailors, a full-blood Congo negro: the two were always engaged in active or passive hostilities.

Now the reader may, perhaps, find it strange that, of all persons, a mulatto, whose mother was a negress, should bear such animosity against the race of his progenitors; but, strange to say, this is almost always the case in nature, and in the negro wars which have desolated many islands—for instance, Hayti,—mulattoes and negroes were ever the most embittered against each other, and gave way to the most fearful barbarity. The mulatto hates, more especially, the remembrance of his descent, displayed in the despised, oppressed race; and the negro spurns his renegade cousin, who is so proud of his white blood. It is just

the same as with the wolf, who has no fiercer and more dangerous foe in the forest than his descendant, the wolf-dog.

When Frank came to himself again, they were far out on the high sea: nowhere could land be distinguished, and only here and there a white dot on the horizon interrupted the monotony of the silent voyage. Here Frank had one of his errors, as regards the life of sailors on board ship, corrected, for if he had fancied that the latter, as soon as the ship was under way, would have nothing to do but sit down and sail-onwards, he discovered now that in nowhere on land is there more and a greater variety of labour than on board ship. So long as it lies in harbour, the crew have plenty of work in storing away cargo, taking in water and provisions, and in procuring the necessaries for a lengthened voyage. But the vessel is scarcely out to sea, when the regular labours of the seaman commence, which, though confined to so small a space, include nearly everything, for which on *terra firma* we should fancy we must apply to so many different workmen.

In the first place, the anchors, which are hanging at the bows, are taken in and fastened securely on deck, so that they may not be shifted by the rolling of the vessel, and do it any injury. Then the chain cables are carried down into the hold, for too much weight on deck causes the ship to sail badly; then the ship is cleaned, and frequently, when the weather is fine, freshly painted inboard; and the operations on the sails and ropes commence, which, like ploughing and manuring with the agriculturist, never cease the whole year round, let as many of the crew as you

please be engaged on them. Old sails must be repaired, new ones made and bent, and sailors usually understand this task; ropes must be looked after and tarred; the standing rigging is most carefully inspected, and the shrouds and stays are, if necessary, tightened, and the masts thus rendered more secure. When all this is finished, the crew pick oakum, and twist spun yarn upon small salving-sticks, in order to have these ropes ready to fasten round various portions of the standing rigging, and so protect it against the friction of the sails, or rubbing against each other.

The regular watches are kept all the time, and while one part of the crew is below, the remainder is up and awake, for the ship sails both by night and day. Some one, too, must always stand at the wheel, and keep the ship's head in accordance with the compass.

Frank, however, had little to do with all these matters; he was engaged exclusively in the cabin, except that he had to help the cook in washing up after meals, and in threatening weather he had to go aloft once or twice, and help to reef, or furl the sails.

The vessel belonged to a large class of Yankee schooners, which, starting from North America with a cargo of potatoes, onions, and all possible northern productions, seek the tropical countries and manage to dispose of them profitably, either for money or money's worth, and do a famous trade, if no accident happens to them. It may be conceived, that they do not always adhere to the strict letter of the law, for those very articles which are prohibited in any country generally fetch the best price, and what brings

the best price is naturally that which the traders are glad to dispose of, even if they dare not do it publicly.

The voyage itself was effected quickly and successfully: on the thirtieth day they crossed the equator, and Frank was a witness of the frequently described visit of Neptune. They then sailed with light winds in the direction of the Brazil continent, which they sighted on the fiftieth day after leaving the Hudson.

On the next morning all were busy on board. Man is, after all, a terrestrial animal, and longs to tread on firm ground once more, especially after a long passage, even though he has enjoyed, during the whole voyage, all the possible comforts and luxuries of his former life. How much more must that have been the case here, when the crew were beginning to grow heartily tired of salt junk and potatoes, and were longing for the beautiful tropical fruits and fresh meat.

The crew, however, had sufficient cause to be jolly, for before them lay extended in all its majesty the fairest coast range of the whole immense American continent; and while the precipitous, boldly cut mountain masses of the interior came out sharply and clearly against the azure sky expanded over them, dense forests extended in gloomy, wildly interlaced masses almost down to the yellow beach, over which the waves foamed, and the waving summits of the beautiful cocoa-palms peered out above them, and gave the whole landscape a peculiar character, most refreshing to the eye of a northerner.

Frank, especially, was quite delighted with all that

surrounded him,—the magnificent, wondrous verdure on the shore; the placid mirrorlike sea with swarms of sportive fishes, which frequently emerged entirely from the water; the numerous white sails which glided up and down the coast sought the port, or else stood out to sea; the extraordinary fishing boats, which they saw here for the first time, simple rafts with a matting sail, which the waves frequently broke over: all this delighted and enchanted him, and he would not have quitted the bows of the vessel, where he had seated himself on an anchor, had not duty, in the shape of the mate, called him back to his labours in the cabin.

The latter received him with a storm of abuse for gaping around him, instead of going to his work; he had not been shipped only to open his eyes, and he would have time enough, and more than he would like, to stare at the mountains in front of them. This last remark calmed Frank the most: the captain, therefore, intended to stay some time here, and let him go ashore, and he went with still greater zeal to work, in order not to excite the displeasure of one of his officers at the moment when he had reached the portals of his fairy palace, and be punished by confinement on board.

Toward midday the *Turtledove* had drawn so close to land, that the houses could be distinguished as they lay embowered among the dark green foliage, and even the forms of the negroes, who moved about in the skirts of the forest. A little stream here poured down from the mountains through a deeply cut and gloomy ravine, and the crew soon found that their captain must intend to enter its mouth; he steered at

least directly for it, and the only precaution he employed, was to station a man in the chains with a short hand-line, who cast the lead now and then, to examine the bottom, as it grew gradually shallower.

The little schooner, however, was built for such rivers. She was broad and did not draw much water, although sea-going vessels must have always a certain depth, lest they should be capsized by a sudden gust of wind. Nor was she so heavily laden as vessels usually are that only carry freight to a certain place, and, consequently, take in as much as they can stow, for they get paid more for every ton they carry. Tom Brendall had only taken a light cargo of articles he considered useful for the barter trade, and he knew what sort of goods were the best for the purpose. Tom Brendall was not visiting this coast for the first time.

CHAPTER V.

HOW TOM BRENDALL COMMENCED TRADING, AND
CÆSAR THE COOK QUITE ALTERED HIS OPINION
ABOUT NEGROES.

A comfortable berth. Tropical fruits and visits from the negroes. Cæsar's altered behaviour. Frank is allowed to land. Description of the vegetation and the scenery. Frank has an idea. He communicates it to old Tom Brendall. The cook has a trip on shore. The captain visits the governor. Frank is set to keep watch.

NEARER and nearer they drew to the land; it seemed almost, as if the forest-clad coast rose higher and higher from the sea, and as the thin diaphanous vapour, which had till now hidden the land like a veil, was dissipated and disappeared in the depths of the forest, all came out clear and distinctly. Yes, while Frank perceived no motion in the vessel, and on the water there was scarcely an object which told of their progress, it seemed almost as if the coast opened its arms wider, closed them slowly but surely around them, and then suddenly dragged them, as if by magic, into the very heart of the forest.

Frank had gone below, after casting a glance around on the clear mirror of the sea, and the swarm of fishing boats that surrounded them, and when he came on deck hardly a quarter of an hour afterwards, the cable was running out. The *Turtledove* had taken up such a position in the little stream, that the prospect of the sea was interrupted by a low promontory, and

her bowsprit, in the actual sense of the word, was imbedded in a thicket of guavas, which covered the edge of a steep slope, and was overshadowed by tall, waving, cocoa palms.

Thus, while the vessel lay in perfect safety in deep water, it would be a very easy task to reach the land by running out on the bowsprit, or to come on board in the same way.

Frank wondered, why the "old man"—as captains are generally termed on board—had chosen such a curious place for anchoring, but Tom Brendall knew perfectly well what he was about—his favourite remark was, "that he was a sharp fellow, and had been in the world since his birth," and then he usually thrust his hands into his trowsers' pockets, as far as he could, and walked up and down the deck whistling harmoniously.

The anchor was hardly down, before a multitude of negroes came alongside in their little boats and canoes, and offered for sale all sorts of magnificent fruits, bananas, oranges, papayas, water-melons, cocoa-nuts, guavas, &c. Old Tom Brendall, however, sent all the traders to the cook, who spoke Portuguese fluently, with orders to buy as much as he thought the crew would require. It is unnecessary to state that the blacks were obliged to take in payment his own goods, vegetables and potatoes, for old Brendall was not the man to spend money when he could pay in onions.

Strange to say, Cæsar appeared in this instance to have quite forgotten his hatred for negroes; he shook each of his half-countrymen by the hand, as if he wished to dislocate their arms, and chatted and

laughed with them, and told them stories or listened to them in turn, till the whole of the deck re-echoed the shouts of the merry band, and the mate at last, who had listened to the noise with a patience which Frank could not comprehend, sprang up, and with a couple of thundering oaths, restored at least partial quiet.

Almost simultaneously with the fruit-boats a somewhat larger canoe had come alongside with two men dressed in European costume. These two gentlemen wore a species of uniform, and probably belonged to the small castle or fort, which stood on the upper promontory, and served to guard the entrance of the harbour. Above it, floated the Brazilian flag. But in both the officers it was only the uniform which gave them a right to claim an European descent, for otherwise their skin did not appear a shade lighter than that of the negroes who had pulled them aboard. They were descendants of white men and Indians, but the scorching sun, which burned above their home, had imparted to their skin the colour of the soil on which they walked.

These gentlemen were the sole government officials who made their appearance, and were soon engaged in examining the schooner's papers, and the cargo she was laden with. The people on board could not surely imagine they could smuggle—without paying them their usual per centage—for this class of officials take bribes, wherever they are found.

The *Turtledove* lay for a week in this pleasant little creek, and Frank had repeatedly obtained leave to go on shore, and visit the inhabitants. But he was most delighted to wander in the neighbourhood of the little stream, and soon found that, on either side of it, there

were very large coffee and sugar plantations, belonging to two Creoles, and which were cultivated by a considerable number of slaves.

He was most interested with the coffee plantations, an excellent variety of which shrub grows in Brazil, and which he found very different from what he expected. In the younger plantations the coffee-berry grew on bushes, but in the older ones he found small trees, twenty to thirty feet high, and covered with very beautiful dark green foliage. Among them taller trees were planted, to furnish shade to the coffee, and such plantations resembled a forest, had not the regularity of the rows revealed the plantation.

The leaves of the coffee-tree bear much resemblance to that of our cherry, but they are rather larger and crisped. The fruit has an extraordinary similitude to the cherry, in shape and colour, but is close to the stalk of the branches, and has a double kernel, containing the coffee-berries we know so well, always in pairs—side to each other in one pod.

Frank was never wearied of regarding these beautiful plantations, in whose cool shade he so gladly walked. But the sugar plantations, like cultivated ozier beds, also attracted him, and he saw cinnamon and nutmeg trees, cocoa bushes, and the valuable creeping plant which bears the fragrant vanilla. He felt as if he were wandering about in a fairy world; things which he had certainly heard of before, but which he could not possibly imagine grew in an open forest, now surrounded him, like the oaks and maples at home, and palm trees, which he had hitherto only known in sacred pictures, appeared here to form a

part of the landscape as much as poplar or chestnuts did in the northern countries.

And then too the extraordinary black men, with their broad flat noses and swollen lips—but they were slaves; they could be sold and beaten by their masters, like horses and cattle, and *were* sold and flogged; and his heart beat fearfully when he thought that they too were human beings, and how he would have felt if any one could have sold his mother or his Helen.

Helen! how was it that the little girl occurred to him; who knew where she now was? and in the great city she had probably long ere this forgotten him.

But the novelty that surrounded him did not give him much time to think of the past—and, in truth, the blacks were the objects in which he took the deepest interest. The cause for this was especially furnished by his own captain, Tom Brendall, who appeared to think much more humanely on this matter than many other Americans. For two evenings in succession he had talked with Frank—though generally he scarce spoke to him—of the sufferings of the poor slaves, and what a blessing it would be for the poor unhappy blacks if they could escape to the free northern states of the union. But that was not possible, for many hundreds of miles of a hot, densely-populated country, where none but slave-owners lived, lay between them, and the poor fellows could not accomplish two days' journey ere they would be re-captured and treated with still greater severity.

“But if they could escape on board a ship,” said Frank, into whose eyes the tears started at the mere

thought, "and if the ship went to sea directly, where these wicked men could not follow it——"

"Yes, if they got off safely," said the captain, shaking his head, "but if they were caught, then the Lord help them! I believe these red-skinned villains, who are themselves not much lighter-coloured than niggers, would hang a fellow to the nearest tree, even if it was a cinnamon one; and if we really escaped, how much money it would take to feed them during so long a voyage: a poor fellow like me, who must live by my voyages, would be entirely ruined."

"If you'd only sail up the Hudson again," cried Frank, who was quite excited by this philanthropic idea, "you should see how much the farmers in our little settlement alone would collect, in order to repay you abundantly for your expenses. I heard often enough in our prayer meetings, how they implored the Lord to liberate the 'black brethren' in the hot countries, and our preachers often collected large sums, in a few days, to alleviate the poor fellows' sufferings; what would they not give if a collection was made to pay the passage-money for men who were really liberated and saved from misery!"

Old Tom Brendall appeared to grow thoughtful—walked up and down the cabin with his hands crossed on his back, and at last said, with a shake of his head:—

"I'll think of it; but I don't trust it rightly. Send the mate down, Frank, but don't speak to a soul on the subject. The first thing they would do here ashore, as soon as they had the slightest scent of such a thing, would be to seize my schooner with all

it contains, and they might hang us all afterwards in the bargain."

"Oh, no!" Frank assured him, "I won't say a word; but I only hope we shall be able to liberate a portion of these poor fellows."

He sprang quickly on deck, sent down the mate, and prepared supper for the cabin and the crew, with double the pleasure he usually felt, for in his thoughts he was considering how they would stand out to sea again with swelling sails, and a great number of liberated slaves on board; and how he would then be able to tell them at home that, on his very first voyage, he had aided in such a good deed. He thought so eagerly on the matter, that at last he did not at all desire they should get off so easily, but would gladly expose his life to some serious risk, in order to play an active part in such a noble affair.

The next day passed without the captain saying a syllable more on the subject; they only unloaded the remainder of the cargo, brought the vessel so close to the steep bank that they could roll or carry their goods ashore by means of planks, and then began to take on board what they had got in exchange, especially coffee and sugar, some vanilla, Maniok flour, which the captain stated he could sell with a good profit in New England, and various other productions of the country.

The Maniok flour was not stowed away, but remained on deck.

The last day the cook had not made his appearance at all on board, and, as the mate said, had obtained leave to visit a relation, whom he had found here accidentally, a slave on a plantation. He was obliged to

have a ticket of leave from the captain, and the latter, who had cut his right hand in the morning, and wore it bandaged, ordered Frank, whose excellent writing he was acquainted with, to write it in English.

The cook returned late, very late; almost at day-break. Frank was in the watch at the time, and saw that he went down straight to the cabin, and waked the captain, to whom he appeared to give a lengthened report.

The next day was appointed for taking in cargo, and it almost seemed as if the captain intended to remain here some time longer; for he had both the mainsail and foresail unbent and rolled up, and ordered various articles for his own use from a couple of black carpenters ashore, which could not be finished under three or four days.

He was himself invited to supper this evening with Don Pedro Alvaro, the commandant of the little fort, whom he had received on board with his officers several times. The two gentlemen came on board to fetch him, were delighted to hear that he intended to lie here at least a week longer, praised him for lowering his sails to save them from the repeated stormy showers, and then left the vessel with him.

It was a very dark night, and, after the captain had left the ship, she was towed back to her old anchorage, and brought so exactly to the same spot, that the end of the bowsprit again ran into the guaiava thicket, but the crew had not received leave to go ashore. Only the cook, with the carpenter and the negro, was absent, and Frank was ordered by the mate to keep watch in the bows, and call him, as soon as he heard the slightest sound in the guaiava bush.

Frank did not exactly know what all this meant; and his surprise increased when he saw that the crew, directly after dark, and when it could not be seen from land what was being done on board, again bent the two large sails to their gaffs, and in fact made every preparation on deck as if they were going to put out to sea directly. The whole was managed so silently and mysteriously, that he could not help seeing something extraordinary was going to take place, and his heart throbbed, when he thought that Captain Brendall had finally determined on liberating a portion of the negroes from their fearful slavery. Now he knew, too, why he was to listen for any sound in the bushes—but why had not the mate told him the reason? *he* would not have revealed a syllable!

CHAPTER VI.

IN WHAT WISE CÆSAR PERSUADES HIS BLACK BRETHREN, AND THE "TURTLEDOVE" PUTS TO SEA WITH A FULL CARGO.

Visit to a negro cabin. A grand consultation. Sambo's objections. A sudden surprise. Death of the overseer. The blacks come on board. Departure from the coast. An unexpected arrival. The *Don Pedro*. Sambo recognizes her. The flight and the pursuit.

THE reader must now accompany us to the nearest plantation and into one of the negro huts, which was situated at no great distance from the mansion, in a thick clump of bananas and oranges, and where an extraordinary number of negroes were assembled by the faint flickering light of a single cocoanut-oil lamp. Cæsar, the cook of the *Turtledove*, was in the very midst of them, and appeared to be playing a far from unimportant part, as all were flocking round him in the greatest anxiety and attention, and listening with breathless silence to what he was telling them. This was, in fact, nothing less than an exhortation to fly from their master, and escape to a free country, where, though they would certainly have to work for their living, they would be free men in God's free atmosphere, and could no longer be sold and flogged.

He did not require to say much on the subject, for every one of them had enough suffering in his own heart, and would have been able to fill up the slightest sketch with glowing blood-red colours. They wanted

no reason to escape their torture and torturers; but was the escape certain?—were they sure that they would not be brought back, and then be treated with far greater cruelty?—and where did the white captain intend to carry them? They had discussed this for three evenings with the same man, and the execution of the scheme was arranged for this evening. But when it came to action, some recoiled from the decisive step, and others felt themselves held here by family ties. The little vessel could not save *all* from slavery and misery, even if every portion of the ship was given up to them.

Sambo, an old nigger, with grey curly hair on his thick round skull, now said: “I have thought over the matter, and it does not please me. I have been long in the world, and have suffered so much, at times, from those of my own colour”—and here he looked the cook firmly in the face,—“but generally from the white men, and so seldom experienced goodness and kindness, that I cannot see why this white man will so suddenly expose himself to great danger, out of pure kindness to his fellow-men. It is all good and proper, that we should work for him in America till we have earned our passage-money, but—I don’t know—the affair appears to me suspicious.”

Cesar was about to make some reply, but another young man belonging to the plantation advanced, and, after accusing the old man of regarding everything in the gloomiest colours, declared that he would most assuredly and joyfully take advantage of this opportunity to escape from the horrors of slavery.

“We cannot be worse off,” he continued his harangue, “even if we were forced to work in that

free country twice as much as we do here, which is impossible: but the white man cannot mean us harm, for there will be many more blacks than whites on board, so that he could not undertake anything against us, even if that were his object. Caesar, here, is himself a negro, and Jim, the other black, has told me repeatedly what a worthy man his captain is, and how much good he has already done for poor black men. I shall try it, then; and my wife and child go with me."

The majority agreed with him: nothing bad could be done to them *with* their will, and *against* their will the captain could effect nothing, even if he desired it. Caesar did his best to persuade them, and the old man at last retired to a corner, declaring that he would take no part in the affair, but at the same time not betray it;—they might do what they pleased, and he could only wish that they might not have to repent it afterwards.

The negotiations were so far completed, and they were on the point of making the necessary preparations, when suddenly some one seized the latch on the outside, and tried to open the door. In a moment the silence of death prevailed in the little room, and the unhappy beings regarded each other in terror: they knew they were engaged in a deed regarded most criminal by their master, if not by God; and the fear of being discovered, and their flight frustrated at the last moment, made their blood run cold. They had indeed every reason to be alarmed, for their late visitor, who had surprised and knocked down their sentry, was no one else than the overseer himself, also a mulatto like Caesar, but a fearfully severe and cruel man, who

had frequently flogged them till the blood came, for the most trivial faults.

"Halloo, within there!" he shouted, on finding the door locked; "open, or I'll beat the door down."

"The overseer!" several whispered.

"Now, then, do you mean to open?" the mulatto shouted, in wild fury; and the old negro at length advanced, with a slow and lingering step, to obey the command. But Caesar had scarcely heard who the unwelcome visitor was, than he sprang through the little back window into the open air, without being noticed by any of the others.

"You infernal-villains!" shouted the infuriated overseer, who was tired of waiting, and a violent kick burst open the weak lock, so that the door flew open. At the next moment the much-feared man entered, with his heavy negro whip in his hand, alone, and his threatening eye turned slowly from one to the other of the poor fellows trembling before him.

"So," he at length said, with a slow sarcastic, yet furious tone, "so, here I find the whole pretty nest of traitors together; and you want to be off, eh? with the schooner, out to sea? But wait, scoundrels!" he then continued, with sparkling eyes, "wait, your soup shall be salted for you! Scip! hey, Scip!" he cried, as he turned to the door; but he started in terror, for at the same moment a dark form with a glistening knife rushed upon him. He was about to utter a cry for help, but a muscular hand was on his throat, and Caesar's broad knife was driven deep into his bosom, so that he fell dead with a loud groan.

"That is murder!" the old negro exclaimed, with a shudder; "great God, what will become of us?"

“Free men!” said Cæsar, laughing, first wiping the knife on the clothes of the murdered man, and then returning it to its sheath; “free, happy beings—his accomplice, Scip, lies out there, also struck by my knife; and now away, my boys,”—he laughed in bold arrogance—“now you have no other chance than to follow my advice, or,” he continued slowly, and looked round contemptuously, “will you wait here for the break of day?”

The men stood for a while in gloomy painful silence round the murdered man, but the stranger was in the right: there was no choice left them but to escape a terrible punishment, which would here await both guilty and innocent; and even the undecided appeared now to be cured of their indecision.

“We must,” they said; “we cannot do otherwise;” and the negroes now hurried to pack together the few articles they must necessarily take with them, and lead their wives and children to the place of embarkation. The white captain had declared that he would weigh anchor by midnight at the latest, and drift out to sea with the ebb tide, so there was no time to be lost.

But the old negro, Sambo, now expressed his willingness to accompany them: nothing else was left him, unless he went straight to his master and denounced the whole plan: and that he would not do. But if he did not go, and the corpse was found the next morning, he knew perfectly well that they would flog him as long as he had a strip of skin on his back.

This was all that Cæsar wanted.

It might be about eleven o’clock, when Frank, who had kept his watch most conscientiously, and had been

not a little supported in his resolution by the countless swarms of musquitoes, began to grow sleepy. He seated himself on the bows, with his back turned to the ship, and began to nod. At times he started up and listened, but he fell back involuntarily into a species of partial sleep, and had, at last, a narrow escape of falling into the water. He then jumped up and walked several times up and down. He was just going to the binnacle-light, near which a small watch hung, to see what o'clock it was, when he felt the vessel shaken by something, and on listening attentively and holding his breath, he distinctly heard that there was some one on the bowsprit, with the probable intention of coming on board in that way.

In accordance with his orders, he now ran down to wake the mate; but the latter ordered him to remain below, and wait for the captain, as he intended to take the watch on deck himself.

Frank did not leave the cabin, but listened now and then up the companion, and soon perceived that a number of persons were coming on board, and were being let down into the maindeck. The captain had also arrived; he remained above, and an active, busy, and yet carefully-concealed scene, was taking place on board.

Frank's heart beat almost audibly; he knew that his captain was on the point of doing a good deed, and restoring a number of poor unhappy beings to liberty, and yet it seemed to him that they were acting wrong, and as if it were a species of robbery, and that he was an accomplice, just as guilty as the rest. Nor did it please him that they were forced to do it all so secretly; but he consoled himself with the reflection,

· how happy the poor fellows would soon be, and he would not permit any other thought to trouble him.

At last all appeared to be in order, for one of the *crew was sent aft to the wheel. Frank was able to notice that they were raising the anchor, for he heard now and then the creaking of the muffled chain, and half an hour later the schooner was drifting with the current and the ebb slowly down the river to the sea.*

It was so dark, that a person could hardly see his hand when held before his eyes, and the distant howling of a rising storm also favoured the secret departure of the vessel. They groped their way by the assistance of the negroes, who knew every stump lying in the water, and pushed with long poles, wherever the banks were low. They knew the danger to which they would be exposed if they were to run ashore on an ebb tide, and have to wait till morning for the flood. They had scarcely escaped from the vicinity of the dangerous banks, when the wind roared over the summits of the trees. It blew directly off land; and when the storm was past, the sky became clear, and the wind had fallen, the *Turtledove* had employed her time so well, that she had left the land many miles behind her, and, as it seemed, was entirely out of danger. The authorities of the little port could not follow them with their boats, even if they were to notice the flight of the slaves on the next morning—and fortunately no ship of war lay there, which could be sent after them.

The negroes danced and sang on deck, when they knew themselves far enough from land to be safe from being heard; old Sambo alone sat silently and sorrow-

fully in a corner, seen by no one, sought by no one, and followed by his own gloomy thoughts, as to what would be the consequences of this rash step, which had received such a sanguinary consecration.

Thus morning at length broke, and when the first grey streak of dawn rose in the east, and extended more and more athwart the horizon, as it grew brighter and brighter, the deck was thronged with dusky figures, and they all looked with beaming eyes on the free heaving sea around them, and back on the distant coast, which lay so far away, that they could scarce distinguish the outline of the forest-clad ravines. Old Tom Brendall walked with great glee on his narrow quarterdeck, and rubbed his hands, while the mate leaned on the low taffrail, and whispered a few words to him whenever he came near him.

"Hang it, captain!" he said, suddenly, as he rose and grasped at the telescope, which lay by his side on the railing: "what sail is that over there, close under the coast? I could not see one on the horizon last night."

"Where?" cried old Brendall, and looked in surprise in the direction to which the mate kept the telescope directed. At length he appeared to have ended his observation, but not at all to his satisfaction, for, handing the glass to the captain, he shook his head, and, pointing with his thumb to the coast, said:—

"I believe we should be better off, if we were farther away from here; the fellow over there doesn't please me, and I shouldn't be surprised if he don't take as much trouble to keep close at our heels, as we shall to get away from him."

“Hang it all!” the old man also exclaimed, after looking a time through the telescope; “by Jupiter Ammon, that’s a man-o’-war! where on earth can he have come from? or is it an Englishman or a Yankee? If it is, they won’t trouble to pick up run-away slaves for Brazilian planters.”

“No, no!” said the mate, shaking his head angrily; “American and English cruisers have nothing to look for so close to the shore; but,” he then suddenly added, “I shouldn’t be surprised if one of the black beasts knows the ship; if it’s a Portuguese or Brazilian man-o’-war that frequently visits the port, the fellows will be sure to recognize it; if not, we have nothing to fear.”

The mate went forwards, without any reply, among the blacks, who were now giving themselves up to unbounded merriment, and did not think of danger. Sharply observing the various groups, he came at last to the old man, who was standing silently and alone in the bows, and looking back at the land and the white sail, which was distinctly visible to the naked eye.

“Halloo, old fellow!” he addressed him; “anything in the wind? don’t that sail please you?”

The old man shook his head, but replied not a word.

“Well, then, come aft to the captain, and look through the glass; perhaps you can tell us who she is.”

The old man regarded him for a moment inquiringly, and then silently obeyed; but on reaching the quarter-deck, he had scarce taken one look through the glass, the management of which he appeared to understand

perfectly, before he handed it back with a strange look of terror, and only said simply, "Don Pedro."

"Don Pedro—who?" the captain asked quickly; "your Don Pedro de —; what the deuce is his name?"

"Not that Don Pedro," the old man replied, shaking his head; "*Don Pedro*, man-o'-war, sails like the wind, and has many guns."

"Hm, that's not so bad!" growled the captain; "but where, on earth, has the villain come from all at once? yesterday evening there was not a trace of him to be seen, neither from land nor at sea."

"She lay behind the northern point," said the negro, and retired slowly from the quarter-deck. The white man was growing angry, and walked hurriedly up and down, and the old negro knew by bitter experience what his race had to expect from white men in such a case.

Captain Brendall, however, could do no more in the matter; every sail his little vessel could carry was already set, and they left the land behind them as quickly as the slight breeze would allow. In the meanwhile, however, they carefully observed the strange sail, which was now lying close to land and probably telegraphing with the fort, and they were not left long in doubt as to her meaning, for suddenly they saw her alter the set of her sails, and, before ten minutes were past, they could not entertain the least hesitation but that she was coming after them in full chase.

CHAPTER VII.

HOW THE TURTLEDOVE WAS CHASED, AND WAS
COMPELLED TO SHOW HER TEETH.

The telegraph is set to work. Old Brendall grows uncomfortable. The corvette gains on the schooner. Sudden appearance of Long Tom. The first shot. The corvette's topmast goes by the board. Escape of the *Turtledove*.

THE old negro had been perfectly in the right: the vessel, whose glistening sails could be distinguished from the deck of the *Turtledove*, was certainly the little Brazilian corvette *Don Pedro*, and had arrived most inopportunately for them. On land, the flight of the slaves, and the murder of the overseer and his driver, had been detected, and through the sudden disappearance of the schooner the only too well-founded suspicion had fallen on her. She was, however, far out of reach of their guns, and the commandant of the little fortress was only able to send powerless execrations after her, when, just at the right time and most unexpectedly, the *Don Pedro*, which was cruising on the coast, hove in sight, and obeyed the hurriedly hoisted signals of distress.

The commandant of the fort very wisely contented himself with telegraphing to the vessel, that the schooner still in sight had carried off slaves from the coast, in order that the man-o'-war might lose no time in following her, and the captain had scarce understood the signals before he set every sail in chase of the schooner.

We will now return on board the *Turtledove*, where old Brendall was somewhat restlessly regarding the corvette and then the sky, which also looked menacing enough, and promised a fresh and powerful breeze. The light wind they had hitherto had, would have been much pleasanter to him. Before an hour had elapsed the storm burst, which had in the meanwhile risen higher and higher above the coast; the wind came across the sea in fitful gusts; and the Imperial corvette flew under a crowd of canvas onwards, without even taking in her lighter sails aloft, and approached the schooner so rapidly that it was no longer any secret to the people on deck, and the poor, unhappy slaves stood together in dense groups, and imparted their apprehensions to each other.

Nor did old Brendall feel altogether comfortable, for if the wind held on thus for another hour, the corvette, in spite of his keeping as close to the wind as he possibly could, would come 'near enough to fire into him, and if one of his masts was hit, he would be irrevocably lost.

"The devil himself must have sent that confounded hulk after us this identical morning," he growled to himself, as he paced angrily up and down the quarter-deck, with his hands behind his back; "I'd give my little finger if we were out of sight."

"A fellow is glad to give his little finger to save his neck," said the mate drily, who was leaning at no great distance from him over the bulwarks; "but that confounded barque sails well, and holds the wind better than most of the Brazilian vessels. We shall have to show him our teeth after all."

"I shouldn't like it," growled the old man, shaking

his head ; " the black scoundrels would smell tinder ; they are generally sharp enough."

" It would be of precious little use to them," said the mate, but stopped on seeing that Frank was standing at no great distance from them, and busied in hanging out a table-cloth he had just washed to dry. Frank had certainly heard what the two men had said, and was in truth rather confounded by it. What was it the blacks should not notice, and why did the captain apply such opprobrious epithets to persons whom he had just liberated from the horrors of slavery ? But as he saw that the mate was watching him, as if suspecting that he had heard more than he ought to have done, he quickly accomplished his task, and went below again.

" Captain," the mate then said, " I don't know if you did right in bringing that boy on board ; I don't trust him exactly, and am almost afraid he'll turn his fangs against us, when he sees our true colours."

" Not he," laughed Tom Brendall, " I'm sure ; not he : he's just out of the wood, with no one at home whom he cares to go back to ; he has told me all his story most fully ; the restless life here suits him exactly, and I'd wager my head that he'll soon be one of the worst when he understands the whole story. Bill Rydell was just such a fair-haired, blue-eyed fellow, and what a devil he became afterwards ! Only put such a fellow on the right track, and he'll go on in it like wildfire."

The mate shook his head incredulously, and looked round again after the strange vessel, which had drawn nearer and nearer with the freshening breeze, and in

doing so he soon forgot the lad, for the danger was so pressing, that their fate would probably be decided within the day. The several parts of the corvette could be now clearly distinguished with the naked eye, and there was not the slightest doubt that she would be within range before the afternoon. The only thing the schooner gained in the chase was, that she should go up rather closer to the wind, but not so far as to escape a long shot, for the corvette was also an excellent sailer, and seemed expressly built for this cruising service.

Till now, the old captain had always hoped for nightfall, and then to get out of sight of his dangerous pursuer under its protection. The sun, however, was still two hours above the horizon, when the enemy came near enough to open fire, and a flash from on board, with the white puff of smoke, which was directly followed by the report, taught them that the chase was approaching its catastrophe. The ball struck the water just in front of the schooner, and bounded for some distance ere it finally disappeared.

Old Brendall seemed undecided as to what he should do, but of course he did not obey the order to heave to which this ball indicated. A second flash then burst from the side of the vessel, and the ball whizzed over the quarter-deck, carrying away one of the stanchions in its progress.

"The devil take them!" the old man muttered between his clenched teeth, and stamping his foot and producing a little whistle he wore round his neck, he sounded it sharply and shrilly.

The second watch, which had expected nothing else, now came silently on deck like spirits from the

nether world, and the second whistle sounded sharply across the water.

Frank, who had also obeyed the extraordinary signal, had just reached the deck when the second whistle sounded, and was not a little astonished when the sailors tore down a shed which stood near the galley, and displayed a glistening long brass gun, generally called "Long Tom." The gun was mounted on a tall and strong metal pin, and could be turned in any direction, while the crew seemed perfectly well acquainted with its management.

The negro Tim served this gun, which was loaded and pointed with almost incredible speed, and just as the third flash was seen issuing from the enemy's quarters, the lanyard was pulled, and the whizzing messenger of death flew on its destructive course.

The corvette's ball was harmless enough on this occasion, and fell short; but "Long Tom" had spoken with much better purpose to the Brazilians, for it could be clearly seen that the deck of the enemy was covered with splinters. The *Brazilian* now became angry too, and a whole broadside hurtled over the waves, while the schooner fell off slightly from the wind, in order to take a better aim; and when the second shot was fired—although the result was not immediately seen, for the ship sailed onwards and not a rope appeared to be touched—still, at the next moment it was observed what important results had followed this probably accidental shot, for before those on deck could perceive it, and ease the weight on the wounded topmast, it fell with a crash, and the entire deck of the corvette was covered with a mass of spars, ropes, and sails.

A thundering shout arose from on board the *Turtledove*, for her crew knew that they had been saved almost by a miracle from a much greater danger than Frank had probably anticipated; but for all that they did not delay a moment in taking advantage of the favourable opportunity. Falling off a couple of points, so that the wind might fill the sails, the graceful vessel bounded over the waves, and they left the crippled ship so far behind them ere night set in, that its hull was no longer visible from their deck.

CHAPTER VIII.

HOW FRANK MADE A VERY UNPLEASANT DISCOVERY,
AND GOT HIMSELF INTO TROUBLE.

A conversation in the cabin. Frank overhears it. The resolution he forms. He imparts his suspicions to Sambo. Caesar suspects his motive. Consultation with old Brendall.

WHEN the sun rose again on the next morning, the *Turtledove*, who had by no means acted up to her name by her warlike proceedings, was alone on the waters, and even from the topmast not the slightest sign could be noticed of the probably severely disabled corvette. The danger was past, and old Brendall walked in delight up and down his little schooner, so wonderfully saved from imminent danger, and even allowed the blacks to prepare a grand festival, to celebrate their now really acquired liberty.

They did not require to be told this twice, and the descendants of an African race, most of whom had

been stolen from their native shores and brought over here in foreign ships, gave themselves up, though they had formerly borne their slavery so patiently, to the wildest dances and noisiest songs, as evidences of their delight.

From this date a quieter season set in on board: on approaching the equator again, they had generally pleasant weather and calms, in which they only advanced slowly: the blacks were well treated, had enough to eat and drink, and found themselves very happy. They could not sufficiently thank the strange white captain, who had broken their fetters, and was now leading them to a happy home.

They had arrived in the latitude of Florida; Frank usually knew exactly where they were, as the captain and mate, every day at twelve, when the observation was taken to calculate the latitude in which they were, marked off the distance they had run, on a chart in the cabin, and did not notice that the boy followed their movements more attentively than they could have anticipated. To his surprise, however, instead of steering direct for Boston, as Tom Brendall had always said he intended, they now steered due west, and, by the chart which was this day left on the table, straight for the West India Islands and the Bahama Channel, where they could not but approach a slave state. But what could be the meaning of it all?

The negroes naturally had not the slightest idea where the spot lay whither they were being taken: they were happy as usual, and the old man alone stood much more frequently than before in the bows, and looked out towards the west. The so suddenly altered course of the vessel disquieted him, for he had

been told that they were being carried to a cold country, and the sun here burnt as hotly, almost worse, than on the coast from which they had been taken only a few weeks before.

Frank was himself curious as to what the object of their voyage could be ; but he dared not ask again, as the only time he had applied to the captain on the subject, he received so short and rough an answer, that he was silent in dismay, and crept back to his work.

At last, on the third day after holding this course, they sighted land, and the captain and mate first examined the distant coast most attentively with their glasses, and then went down in the cabin to see whether their calculations agreed, and what land it could be which now lay before them, stretched in a long blue strip on the horizon.

Frank had given out his last bottle of wine in the cabin on the previous day, and was obliged to go down into the store-room to fetch up some fresh bottles.

This store-room lay just under the cabin, whose floor formed its roof ; the entrance to it, however, was behind the cabin, and led through a narrow pantry, where colours, canvas, and sails were stored ; and to go down there it was not necessary to pass through the cabin. Frank was careful, too, not to enter a place where his two superior officers were now calculating and arguing eagerly, and crawled cautiously in the confined, gloomy store-room, where it was frightfully hot and close in this degree of latitude, in order to fetch what he required as speedily as possible. Quite against his expectation, he here suddenly became

hearer of a conversation which first filled him with surprise and horror, and then caused his hair to stand on end; for what he had hitherto only feared, perchance, through the suspicion aroused by some word accidentally let fall, was now rendered a certainty, an undeniable fact, and the perspiration stood in large drops on his forehead, on learning now, for the first time, in what excellent company he was.

"I'd be precious glad to run up to New Orleans," the captain said; "the fellows would fetch a third more there, and I have acquaintances enough to free me from any unpleasant discussions with the authorities: but the infernal English cruisers, which sniff about everywhere, might come across us just at the threshold, and I believe Havana will be the safest port."

"We shan't get the half in Havana of what they would fetch in New Orleans, with little trouble," the mate growled in reply; "and more cruisers lie before Havana than the Mississippi; it is a question whether we should meet a single one there."

"Whenever a schooner comes in, they are on her heels directly," honest old Brendall remarked; "and the whole pack are in a conspiracy against the slave trade, whether they show American or English colours."

"But, hang it all," the mate exclaimed, angrily, "let them come aboard and inspect our *passengers*, if they please. They are running about free on deck, and have no more idea that they are still slaves, than that this brave barque is the '*Shark*' pirate, which has for a season changed its bold name into that of a gentle, peaceful *Turtledove*. But, deuce take it,

this sort of business don't suit me, and it's the first and last time that I shall vote for such a peddling voyage as this. We have met three ships under way, which we were obliged to leave alone; and who knows if we should not have gained more booty on one of them than the whole lading of black meat will bring us in?"

"They are not quite so confident as they were," said the captain, after a slight pause; "it was most unlucky that we were obliged to show them Long Tom. The old fellow with the four scars across his face—that must be a species of African tattooing—has examined the whole place most carefully, and is always smelling round the cover. A further reason for not going up to New Orleans is, that, even if no black scoundrel can bear witness against us in the Union, still they need only drop a word about 'Long Tom,' and there are always villains enough who take a pride in finding out the bottom of such matters. In Havana, on the contrary, no one will say a word if we had the whole deck covered with Long Toms. If we bring them in slaves, without the English catching us, we shall be most worthy people in their eyes; and if we leave the fellows free till just before entering the port, no English cruiser can have anything to say to us. Once arrived, we can easily kid them on shore, at some safe spot, and then all will be right."

"We could play exactly the same game at New Orleans," the mate objected; "and when we have once delivered them there, their chattering would be of no use, for we have nothing to stop for up there; we'll hire a tug, and, in a couple of days, we

shall be again on the high seas, or further up the Mississippi, if we give our barque a fresh coat of paint. I vote for New Orleans."

The mate had probably risen with these words, for Frank heard steps going toward the door; but as he feared to be noticed below, after what he had just heard, and the scuttle was open right above his head, he crept as quickly as he could out of his hiding-place upon deck. After that he returned to his pantry, to have a little reflection about what he should do, for he was firmly determined, from the first moment that the whole fearful truth was revealed to him, that he would not be an accomplice in such a deed.

But what to do now? To give the captain notice, and go simply ashore as soon as the schooner entered a port, that was his first idea; but he had been long enough on board to soon recognize the impracticability, even danger, of such a decision. That would not only not help the poor deceived slaves, but perhaps render their position worse prematurely. But could he not tell them plainly what threatened them? If they knew the whole danger of their position, a mode of salvation might occur to them, and he would also have an opportunity of escaping out of the clutches of these pirates and slave-dealers. And yet he started at the danger to which he exposed himself, if the mate, more especially, had a notion that he knew so much, and his opinion on the subject.

He did not know what to do, and the perspiration rolled in large bright drops from his brow: he could no longer endure the confinement, and he went upon deck—the captain and mate were still in the cabin—and walked forwards to the bows, where he looked long

and sorrowfully at the beautiful coast which lay outstretched before them, and which they would probably set foot on in such a fearful manner.

“What coast that?” a gentle voice said, close to him, in broken English; “what coast that, Massa?”

Frank looked round hurriedly to the speaker, and recognized the old negro, Sambo, who had walked up close to him, and cautiously looked round to see if they were noticed by any of the sailors. Frank hesitated for a moment to reply—his heart beat almost audibly in his bosom, and the decision of all their fates lay, probably, in his answer; but he could not lie, and when he regarded the old man, with silver hair and deeply-furrowed features, at his side, he felt horrified, for he remembered that he himself, although innocently, was one of those who had betrayed the poor negro.

“Massa know how that coast is called?” the old man said once again, and looked mistrustfully in the terrified countenance of the boy, but himself started back when the lad replied, in a gentle, hurried whisper—

“Cuba!”

“And we,” the old man said, after a long and painful pause, in which he tried to read his fate in the boy’s open face—and did read it, too,—“and we, where are they taking us?”

Frank could no longer restrain himself, and, careless of the consequences, told the old man, in a few words, of what he had been an involuntary hearer so shortly before. The old man, however, required no detailed statement; all this was only the confirmation of what he had himself feared since he had seen the gun, now so carefully concealed again, the usual armament of

pirates, and he sat for a long while with his chin resting on his chest, and his hands firmly clasped round his knee. At this moment the cook came out of the galley, and when Frank turned away from the old man, lest Caesar should see the tears which filled his eyelashes, the mulatto stood for a moment, and his cold restless glance was fixed on each in turn; then, however, he thrust his hands into his trowsers pockets, and walked back whistling into the caboose.

The *Turtledove*, as the dangerous schooner, one of the most notorious and feared pirates of the West Indian seas, was now called under its false flag, gradually drew nearer and nearer to the coast, apparently steering for the northern extremity of the island.

It was eight bells in the evening, and the captain had just gone into the cabin to send the mate to his watch on deck, when the cook slipped in cautiously, after looking into Frank's bunk. The boy was sleeping gently and calmly, for his healthy powerful frame required rest even at a time when his mind might be excited by terror and care. When the mulatto had convinced himself of this fact, he passed through the doorway of the cabin, whence the mate had been watching him attentively, and, walking up quickly to the captain, whispered—

“We are betrayed;—the white boy in there has put a flea in old Sambo's ear. The black scoundrels know that the land on the lee is Cuba, and that they are going to be sold again.”

“If I didn't think so,” the mate hissed through his clenched teeth; “if my advice were followed, we'd throw the little viper overboard. That's a pretty job; the devil to pay, and no pitch hot!”

"Infernal young blackguard!" the old man muttered to himself; "but are you certain of it?"

"As certain as I can be of anything," the mulatto assured him. "This afternoon, I saw the two together in the bows, whispering, and when I went up, the boy turned away; but as I had my suspicions, I have been on the watch this evening, and soon was certain that the blacks knew more than would suit us,—they were putting their heads together, and five or six of them were having a consultation as to what they should do. I could not understand all they said, for the thick bulkhead rendered it indistinct; but that they are now on their guard is certain, and I wished to warn you, captain. It would be best, before all, to get the boy out of the way, or else he'll cause us trouble enough."

"I say the same," the mate asserted, "dence take him; from the first moment I didn't like him, and though I'm not superstitious, I felt that that white-haired boy would bring us ill-luck—if he has not now managed to make us all the victims of his honesty."

The mulatto looked sarcastically at the mate on hearing the last word, but said not a syllable, for the "old one" was walking up and down the cabin with folded arms, and muttering the most fearful curses. The mulatto remained at the doorway, for he expected that he would have a job to perform. The captain, however, did not appear disposed to revenge himself on the boy—he was safe enough; but how to avert the danger which threatened them all from the now-infuriated blacks, in which it must inevitably come to a tremendous battle? In such a case, he alone would be the loser; for even if the result was not for a

moment doubtful, as all the arms were in his own possession, still many of the blacks must be killed or maimed, before they could become masters of them again, and each of them would be a clear loss of so many hundred dollars. Cunning might perhaps save him in this dilemma.

"How many blacks—men, I mean, for the women and children don't count here—have we altogether in the hold?"

"In the hold?" the mate slowly repeated, counting them over in his mind; "let me see—three, five—eight, and five in the cabin, are thirteen; and five-and-twenty for'ards—eight-and-thirty; without old Sambo."

"Eight-and-thirty," said the captain, shaking his head; "confound the boy—if it's not too late—and it can't be done any other way, well;—we'll try it!"

"But what then?" said the mate, "we have not much time left for experiments, and the little villain——"

"Must help us in it," the old man laughed; "they entertain no suspicion of him; but you shall learn all to-morrow; for this evening let them consult quietly together: they can't alter it, for all that."

The old man, cunning enough when he wanted to carry out any plan, seemed perfectly satisfied with himself, and simply sent both the mate and cook to their work, though they would so gladly have heard the details of his scheme.

CHAPTER IX.

HOW CAPTAIN BRENDALL COUNTED HIS PASSENGERS,
AND WHAT SAMBO SAID TO IT.

Frank has an interview with the captain. He is sent as envoy to the negroes. Sambo's vain warning. The treacherous scheme of the mate. Frank attempts to interfere. The struggle. Death of Caesar the cook. The negroes are defeated. Frank in limbo.

THE next morning, at an early hour, the captain, the mate, and Caesar the cook, had a short consultation together; or rather, Old Tom made them acquainted with his scheme. A fight was almost inevitable after what had passed—in that all agreed, unless they could secure the strongest and most respected among the band; and this they intended to effect. The “old one” then sent the others forward to post their men, as he had told them; they must for that purpose choose the best of the crew, and he remained alone in the cabin, with a pair of loaded pistols in a little drawer before him, whither Frank was sent a few minutes later by the cook.

Frank's heart certainly beat audibly, when he received orders to go down to the old man: he knew that, in acting rightly, he had acted against him and his interests, and how furious the old man would be when he learned it—he had no thought of further danger for himself. He expected in fact nothing less than to bear the whole brunt of the captain's anger; but he was not a little surprised at his receiving him

in the most friendly manner, and telling him that they would probably have to heave to somewhere on the coast, and take in fresh water. He therefore intended to make lists of his passengers, where they came from, what their names were, and their age, as he would be forced to show the list in the port. As there was not a breath of wind stirring this morning, he would take advantage of the opportunity, and Frank was to go forward, and send the people down.

"But not all at once," the old man added, as the boy hurried to leave the cabin, delighted at having got off so cheaply; "one after the other, Frank—the mate will send them all on deck, men, women, and children, and then they will come down here in turn, and go back into the main-deck through that door I have had made, where they must wait till all is over, or else there'll be some confusion; just explain that to them, Frank."

"Yes, captain," cried the boy readily; and in three bounds he had reached the top of the companion-ladder.

The negroes had in the meanwhile discussed the peril to which they were exposed, and Sambo had advised them, in case it came to extremities, to possess themselves immediately of all the handspikes, which were arranged on deck in several places. The handspike is a fearful weapon in the hand of a powerful man; and even if they did not understand how to manage a vessel, still they would be able to keep afloat, until they were picked up and saved by some regular cruiser. They were naturally all determined to die sooner than let themselves be sold as slaves again, and proposals were already made to bring the

affair to a decision at once, by addressing the captain; and telling him plainly of what they suspected him—when Frank came to them and announced the proposed lists of names, &c.

The old man warned them not to go down singly into the cabin; but Frank assured them that there was not the slightest danger, as the captain was below by himself, and whatever might be his object hereafter, he was quite certain no danger hung over them there. They were well aware they had nothing to fear from the young lad, for he had proved that he meant well by them, and so they determined on obeying the order. Sambo, however, who was to go last, was appointed to tell the captain at the same time that they were aware what they had to expect from him, and were ready to signal the first ship that approached them and denounce him, on the slightest attempt to deprive them of their liberty.

“Halloo, below there!” the mate’s voice cried at this moment through the hatch, “all on deck for review—up with you, men and women; afterwards you can sleep the whole day if you like.”

The negroes who were not already on deck quickly obeyed this order; and a portion of them were about to go down straight to the cabin, when the mate laughingly stopped them, and made them understand, as well as he could in his broken Portuguese, that the captain had only one hand to write with, and so could only receive one at a time.

“You long scamp,” he then turned to a young lad, “can go first; or, stop, we will take the women and children first, and then it will work better—so now off we go, and mind you keep order.”

• One of the women with a child in her arms was to go first : and Frank had also been called to undertake the writing, and inscribe their names, while the captain questioned them. This all went on with considerable regularity and speed—one after the other climbed cautiously down the narrow steep ladder, and, after being examined, quitted the cabin again by a small door, which led first into a dark store-room, in which a light was burning, and then into the main-deck, though they were obliged to climb over a quantity of cables in their progress.

The mate stood at the top of the steps, and called those singly who were to go down, and when all was in due order, he did not wait till all was finished below, but let one woman go down as far as the door. From the main-deck the women, as they returned, could converse with their husbands on deck ; but a sailor kept watch here, to let no one up again before the lists were made out ; all went on so quietly, and the crew laughed and gossiped with the negroes, so that they soon began to feel safer, or at least convinced that for the present no harm was intended them. Old Sambo was the only one still dissatisfied, and sat at the fore-hatch, to learn from some of the women what they had been asked, how they had been treated, and, especially, if they had seen any one in the cabin beside the captain and the boy. These questions were asked in the language of his own country, and the sailors, who were also looking down, could not understand anything of it. The answers, however, must have been satisfactory, or aroused no further suspicion, for the old man made no remark to them, and only fell back again into his old watchful position.

Now came the men: the mate sent four or five of the young fellows forwards, where one of the sailors, a Portuguese, was telling the negroes who surrounded him a story which convulsed them with laughter.

"Halloo, my boy!" the mate now called to one of them, --he was the most powerful of the whole band, a gigantic fellow, with broad shoulders and muscular arms—"make haste, that we may get the affair finished, or else it will be dinner-time before it's all over."

The negro obeyed, pulled up his white linen trousers, and parted the woolly hair on his forehead. He then quickly descended the companion; but he hardly reached the bottom step when he received a tremendous blow on the temple, and was hurled to the ground like a sack; the blow had been struck with a life-preserver, and the unhappy fellow was immediately dragged, bound and gagged securely, into the store-room.

Frank, who was busily engaged in writing, and sat with his back to the steps, had not had the slightest idea of such an act of barbarity, until he heard the fall, and turned round in alarm. But ere he could utter a word, old Brendall's hand was on his shoulder, and close to his forehead he saw the muzzle of the armed pistol, while the old man, whose eyes seemed to flash fire, hissed in his ear:—

"One word, viper, and I'll blow your brains up to the deck, as if they were chaff in the wind;—you villain, do you think I took you on board and fed and clothed you, that you should reward my good deeds with treason? Quiet—one word, and you are a corpse: my forefinger is quivering to pay you your well-merited reward."

• “Here’s another coming down,” the mate exclaimed again at this moment; “now then, fatty, make haste and get down!”

Here the legs of one of the negroes became visible; at the next moment he stood below, and saw at a glance the danger that menaced him, but it was too late, and while he started back in horror, the blow struck him which hurled him to the ground.

A third, a fourth, and fifth followed in this manner, and the captain by this cunning and devilish scheme would easily have been able to render one half, and those the strongest of the band, harmless, had not old Sambo above kept a watch over those who went down and those who again became visible in the main-deck. Caesar was the first who noticed the danger which threatened their scheme, and he whispered to the mate as he passed him, to get the old fellow away from his post, or else he would notice what they were about.

“We’ll soon stop his fun,” the mate laughed gently to himself; and crossing over the deck he called Sambo by name.

The old man did not appear to hear him.

“Halloo, Sambo, my man—one of you just go and nudge the deaf old rascal in the ribs;—Sambo, hang it, man, the captain wants you.”

“But I don’t want captain,” the old man growled, without leaving his place, and then shouted below,—“Congo—where is Congo? he went down the first, and I have not seen him come back yet!”

The sixth had just gone down, and while he was being gagged and rendered harmless, Frank, who could no longer endure to be the witness of such horrors,

FRANK WILDMAN'S ADVENTURES.

sprang up, but was felled senseless to the ground by the captain's fist.

"Congo—where is Congo?" the old man now shouted below, louder than before;—"what! Congo not there yet? and Guinea not there either?—Stop, stop, behind there!" he shouted to a couple of young fellows, who were just preparing to go down; *"stop, there are some still below—let them come up first."*

"There is no one below, you black scoundrel!" the mate shouted, scarcely suppressing his fury, at the old man preventing the fruition of their scheme; *"come, get on, boys, why are you standing there and gaping?"*

"Sambo says not go," one of them replied.

"Sambo be hanged!" the sailor growled; *"make haste and go below, and don't keep the others waiting."*

"Stop, stop, stop—treachery!" the old negro now yelled across the deck, and Scip required no further warning, for the mate at the same moment drew a pistol, while the sailors suddenly threw themselves on the startled and surprised negroes, and struck down all who opposed them.

But they did not find them so utterly unprepared: the old man's shout had been given at the right moment, and seizing the nearest handspikes, as they had arranged, they offered an obstinate resistance to the sailors. Scip, especially, one of the most powerful of the band, who had been in such imminent peril of entering the lion's den, escaped the mate's furious blow, and seizing a broken piece of a handspike gave the mate such a blow on the temple, that he fell back

against the coombings of the hatchway, and was hurled to the bottom of the companion.

This gave Scip's comrades time to collect, for the sailors below, who were just on the point of rushing on deck to assist the others, were impeded by the mate's body as it fell in their way: they soon cleared the bows of the vessel from all the white men, and called to the blacks who were in the main-deck, to come up. But Cæsar had already taken his measures to prevent this, for he scarcely noticed that the negroes scented treachery, and would probably defend themselves, before he sprang, with one of the sailors, to the hatchway, from which the ladder had been removed early in the morning, and drew across it the heavy companion, upon which he threw two heavy casks of Maniok flour, placed there for the purpose.

But his treachery to his own race was fated, on this occasion, to bear bad fruit. Scip, who had vowed to kill the mulatto, as soon as Sambo had informed him of the captain's shameful design,—for only by his persuasion had they escaped from their former master,—hardly saw by what devilish cunning their destruction was prepared and was now being executed, than he threw himself on the mulatto, careless of personal danger, and with the war-cry of his race on his lips.

The latter heard the yell, and with a rapid glance at his assailant, he speedily recognized the danger that threatened him and turned to fly, but it was too late, and when he found his foe close behind him, he had only time to turn and draw his knife, which—like all the other sailors on board the pirate ships—he had concealed this morning beneath his wide Guern-

sey. Although he struck furiously at the negro with his knife, what avail was steel against the rush of his aroused assailant? The negro stooped down for a spring, like a tiger that is certain of its prey, and spurning the weapon he held in his hand, for he longed to clutch his victim in his grasp, he hurled it from him, and bounded furiously on the upraised knife of his enemy.

The knife entered his side and the wound was mortal; but his iron fingers were pressed on the throat of the mulatto. Caesar attempted to cry for help; but his strength failed him: one of the crew sprang forward and pulled Scip back, in the intention of tying his hands, for it was to their advantage to spare the life of their slaves as far as they could; but it was in vain: the avenger held the dying man convulsively, and gloated over the sight of his fearfully distorted features.

Tom Brendall had by this time found his way on deck, past the senseless body of his mate, and, followed by the rest of the crew, he rushed with boundless courage on the band of negroes, who immediately awaited the attack. Both parties knew what they had to expect from each other, but Tom Brendall was more especially conscious that such a favourable moment as this, when a portion of the negroes was bound and another imprisoned on the main-deck, would never return. Unless he conquered now, the fearfully excited slaves would be masters of the ship, and himself and his crew were irrevocably lost.

There is nothing more terrible in the world than the struggle of despair on board a ship: the conquered have no hope in flight—death stalks around them, and

while frenzy takes the place of fear, the weakest man at last becomes a giant.

Nevertheless, the selfishness of their enemies in this instance helped the poor betrayed negroes: any one they killed or wounded dangerously would be a clear loss, and the pirates at first would not make use of their fire-arms. But of what avail were their knives to them? The negroes stood on the fore-castle with their handspikes raised, and every man they struck fell senseless on the deck.

"Thunder and death!" the old man shouted when their attack was repulsed by the blacks, who were fighting for their lives, and the noise of rending wood reached his ear from below; "the villains are breaking out from the main-deck - two of you to the cabin, and strike at every black head that shows itself."

"Forwards, there, forwards!" the aged Sambo yelled at this moment; "help, boys, to liberate our comrades, and then the vessel will be ours." And springing from the fore-castle he rushed on the pirates, closely followed by his compatriots. This *coup de main* was so successful that the crew had great difficulty in holding their own, while from the cabin sounded the wild cry of the other negroes, who had burst open the door leading into it, and were now forcing their way on deck.

But the time was now past when the pirates could spare their victims, in the hope of keeping their slaves sound, wind and limb; they were compelled to defend their own lives, and Brendall's hoarse shout of "Fire!" echoed across the deck.

The effect was terrific and ruinous for the negroes; for the white men tore the canvas from a chest in the

centre of the deck which had been placed there during the morning, and had not been noticed by the negroes, and taking out the already loaded fire-arms, they hurled destruction in the ranks of the enemies.

"Forwards!" Sambo shouted, who saw that their only safety lay in spurning death; "Forwards!" but it was his last word. Tom Brendall, pressing his pistol almost against his temple, drove a bullet through his brain, and the next shot hurled another negro to the ground, who was just rushing at the captain.

Although the other negroes, who had hitherto been confined in the main-deck, now rushed forward, a shower of lead greeted them, and before they could collect their strength, the pirates, who had clubbed their muskets, had driven the terrified negroes back to the fore-castle and kept them there.

But let us pass over the horrors of this terrible, unnatural conflict—when Frank recovered his senses, all was over, but he found himself in the hold, bound, and around him lay the chained forms of the slaves.

For four days he lay in the sweltering, burning hold, and fancied he should die; for four days he heard the curses and cries of pain from his neighbours, who were longing for death, to bring them at least an alleviation of their torture. Many of them were wounded, and gasped for water to quench the feverish thirst that parched their tongues; but only twice a day did one of the crew come—the Portuguese who performed the duties of the cook—and brought them a hard ship's biscuit and a draught of water to keep them at least alive.

On the fourth evening they heard the anchor chain running out, and blessed the hour which brought any

change in their situation, for let it be what it would, it must afford them alleviation, as it could not be more fearful.

By day they certainly heard steps and strange voices on deck, but no one came below to look at them; even the cook was absent at the regular hour, and it must have been at least ten o'clock, when he brought them their scanty, and yet so longed-for meal. He was followed on this occasion by the captain and two of the crew, and Frank was released from the stanchion, to which he was bound, and carried into the storeroom aft, where he was left to himself, while the two pirates who accompanied him, made no reply to the questions he addressed to them.

Oh! how he enjoyed the cool, fresh, night breeze, when they lifted him on deck, and led him to his new prison! how he inhaled with greedy respirations the pure and freshening blast, which came from the neighbouring mountains—but he was allowed no time to enjoy that which God had granted to all his creatures equally. He could only cast a rapid glance around, and he saw that they were at anchor before an immense city, whose thousand lights greeted him, and mountains enclosed the whole scene; but then his torturers forced him to descend to his prison, and night—fearful, horrible, darkness—surrounded him.

“Why doesn’t the old one send the young villain overboard?” one asked the other, as they again ascended the companion; “there are sharks enough to spare us all further trouble—the mate is besides quite wild, that we didn’t do it long ago.”

"The old one didn't like it!" the other growled, "he thinks we must have a steward, and would run the same risk with any other boy: this one is, at least, a little broken in," he added, "and will soon be all right."

"Hem! I don't know!" the first said again, "when it ain't in the blood, teaching isn't of much use, as my father always said, when he wanted to make a parson of me; and there he was quite right, the parson wasn't in my blood, and so it is with this boy. The pirate ain't in him, and the sooner we get rid of him, the better—he'll do no good—the devil take such squeamish cubs."

The two men went forwards again, and for a whole week Frank saw no one save the cook, who brought him his prison fare, but at times fresh tropical fruits, and a glass of wine now and then, so that he should gain his strength again, as he said. At the expiration of this period, Frank heard the anchor weighed once more, the vessel quivered to its keel, when the heavy chain wound round the capstan—then all became quiet—the vessel gently heeled over—half an hour later, and its regular pitching and heaving showed they were out to sea. The poor boy sank despairingly back on his hard bed, for he was dragged out to sea once again in the company of these monsters, and what would now be his fate, when so utterly and hopelessly in their power?

CHAPTER X.

HOW FRANK BECAME A PIRATE—THE FIRST PRIZE.

Frank is again released. The captain's warning. A Swedish brig is attacked and boarded. The fate of the crew. Walking the plank. An unexpected incident. The *Turtle-dove* is baulked of her prey. Arrival of two men-of-war.

FRANK had scarcely had time to convince himself, by the motion of the vessel, that they had really gone to sea again, than the door of his prison was opened, and the Portuguese came in to take off his chains.

"Now keep quiet, my boy," he said, at the same time, "and be reasonable for the future-- the captain is willing to close an eye, and set you free, but I wouldn't be in your skin if he catches you again interfering in his affairs: so mind what you're about, my boy, and be careful—you must know best what's good for your hide."

With this well-meant warning the Portuguese unloosed the padlock, and when the boy rose slowly and stretched his limbs, in order to accustom them to their now unusual exercise, he opened the door, and added laughingly: --

"Come on, comrade, and mind you get to leeward of the old man; but you'll find it a hard matter, I expect."

Frank very clearly understood what the sailor meant by this, but was at the same time resolute, that, let what would happen, he would not yield a hair's

breadth to the man who had brought him into such a situation by false representations. Besides this, wearied of his life, it appeared to him quite indifferent what the villain did to him; and yet he was far from having seen all the horrors of this fearful vessel, and was fated to be a witness of much worse scenes, than those he had already experienced—and Frank believed that it had been the most fearful thing that could have possibly happened.

“Halloo, my boy!” the captain shouted to him, as he entered the cabin,—“have we knocked the nonsense out of you a little? You ought by rights to make acquaintance with the gunner’s daughter, and I promised it you, but I will first try once more what effect kindness will have on you, and I hope you will repent your ingratitude, and behave yourself better—shame on you, to betray your benefactors to a band of niggers.”

“I owe you no gratitude,” the boy replied boldly, and in the full consciousness of his rectitude; “when I came aboard I thought you were honest traders, and not what you are,” he added, gloomily, “and had you let me go my way then unhindered, I should now be working for honest people, happily and contentedly. But let me go now, and I will not say a word about you to any one; it will be a warning to me for my future life, but, indeed, you have no right to claim my gratitude.”

The captain did not appear to be at all angry at the boy’s bold speech, on the contrary, he laughed quietly, and then remarked:—

“I am glad, my boy, that you won’t let yourself be bullied—I like boldness and courage, but it mustn’t

be applied in a wrong direction," he added, menacingly, and his eye assumed a cold and terrible appearance; "the way overboard is short, and remember, Frank, it will only cost me one word, if ever I have cause to be dissatisfied with you again. But," he added, in a kinder tone, "you will be more reasonable—thousands have grown so before you, and there is an old sailor's rule, never to keep higher in the wind than the course you want to steer; if you do so, it generally brings its own punishment. So now to your work again, my boy—Porto has managed affairs very queerly, especially in washing up, since you have been off duty, and it's time for matters to be in order again. Not a word more," he angrily interrupted the boy, as he attempted to speak; "if you promised to behave yourself I wouldn't believe you till I had proof of it, and anything else will do you no good, but only make your case worse. So 'right about face,' as they say ashore, and be off with you."

The old man turned away, and Frank, who clearly saw that no discussion would be of any use at the present moment, left the cabin, and went in the first instance on deck, to see whereabouts they were.

The *Turtledove* was standing out to the sea with a fresh northerly breeze, and every sail set, and the vessel looked as clean and tidy as if it had just left port, new rigged and painted. Frank could not see a sign of niggers—even the two blacks, formerly belonging to the crew, Cæsar, the mulatto, and Jim, had disappeared, and the maindeck was empty, and the port-holes wide open. Frank shuddered, when he thought of what could have become of all the unfortunates, but he dared not ask after them, and the dark scowl-

ing faces, many of them still displaying unhealed wounds, that angrily and menacingly regarded him, did not, in truth, aid in causing him to forget the past scenes of terror.

The mate himself gave him the worst greeting ; he had a tremendous, almost fresh wound across his forehead and nose, which gave his generally ugly face a still more terrible expression.

"Down with you to your own place," he attacked the boy, "you young scoundrel ! what have you got to spy here—you're looking after your black villains of comrades ? if my advice were followed, you wouldn't *have troubled to look after them again. Off with you, and not a word, or I'll knock out your brains, if a thousand 'old ones' interfered—treacherous young hound !*" and he stamped his foot with fury.

Frank's heart bounded, the blood rushed to his temples, and the tears filled his eyes, through pain and anger ; but what could he, a child, do against all these grown-up criminals ? he could only have given them cause for further ill-treatment. Still, he vowed to himself that he would repay the insult whenever he had an opportunity, and the bitter feeling of revenge took root for the first time in his young and yet uncorrupted heart.

From that day he carried a knife in his belt, under his jacket : he wished to be protected against the ill-treatment of these men, and if they drove him to extremities, they should at least feel the sting of the worm which they had so mercilessly trampled on.

But there were soon other things to do on board than ill-treat a boy. The look-out man signalled a ship on the lee bow, two days after the events just

described, and the *Turtledove*—who, in spite of her evident character, still retained this peaceful name—steered straight towards her, so as to cross her bows. Before long they had drawn near enough to recognize the flag, and it was soon found to be a Swedish brig, probably bound to one of the Dutch or French settlements in Central America, to barter her cargo for the produce of warmer latitudes.

Now, however, the character of the schooner was openly declared, as they probably expected an easier prize by terrifying the foe. The swivel was uncovered, and ammunition brought on deck: the crew were armed to the teeth with cutlasses and pistols, and *when within gun-shot of the Swede, the blood-red signal of murder was run up to the peak, and fluttered in the breeze.*

On board the Swede terrible confusion suddenly prevailed: the crew ran back and forward, and it was evident that the fearful symbol of the pirate had terrified them. The *Shark*—for even the false name, which had been till now stretched over the right one, on a piece of canvass, was removed—had, in the mean while, though without firing a shot, approached so near the brig that they could hear the confused orders on board—when Tom Brendall gave the signal to fire, and directly afterwards the shot pierced the brig's quarter, and entered the cabin.

The sailor at the wheel through this lost his head so completely, that he allowed the ship to fall off from the wind, and offered the pirate an excellent chance to sweep her decks, fore and aft, with the second shot.

The mate of the *Shark* was standing at the swivel, and a really satanic smile crossed his features on

perceiving the advantage thus offered them. He did not hesitate a moment in employing it; and the next shot produced a fearful effect on board the doomed brig. Crashing through a crowd of people who were collected on the quarter-deck, it whizzed close past the mainmast and struck the foremast, whose splinters wounded the sailors standing around, while the mass of woodwork and spars slowly fell over the side.

The brig was a wreck; and the schooner, perfectly sure of meeting with no further resistance, ran along-side of her a few minutes later, while the pirates leapt aboard from the hammock nettings, and threw themselves on the few defenceless sailors, whom they bound and placed a guard over.

The mate of the brig had been killed by the second shot, the captain wounded by a splinter from the bulwarks, and, while the rapacious band hurried below to carry off all worth taking, Tom Brendall commanded the Swedish captain to give up his ready money or any valuables he possessed. The latter, however, though smarting from his wounds, bit his lips together, and told the pirate he might do his worst, but he should not have the money,—that was well concealed, and should swim or sink with the ship.

"There are ways to persuade obstinate gentlemen like you, my old fellow," the pirate said, with a laugh; "such things often happen in our trade, and we know how we have to treat them. If your money is dearer to you than the lives of your crew, we can always have a lark with you afterwards. On deck, there!" he shouted to several of his own crew,—“push out the plank, and make the lads in the bows take a walk one after the other, till I tell you to stop.”

"Ay, ay, sir," the myrmidons readily replied; a plank was thrust about six feet outwards from the bulwarks, while a number of the bandits put their feet on the other end, and seizing the first to hand of the crew of the ill-fated vessel, they unbound him and bade him "march."

The poor fellow knew his fate; it is the usual custom of pirates to get rid of their prisoners in this way; and without saying a word, though with fury in his glance, he walked toward the plank. He was a powerful young fellow, of a truly athletic form; and one of the pirates who performed the functions of boatswain, and was now leaning against the bulwarks to watch the death of the first victim, said, with a malicious smile,—

"He'll make a tidy hole in the water, and be a delicate morsel for the fishes."

"You *dare* not murder my men in that way!" the Swedish captain now shouted, and regarded the terrible scene with deathly fear.

"Dare?" old Tom Brendall remarked; "what don't we dare,—and who is to prevent us? Over with him!"

"Come, my beauty, make haste!" shouted the boatswain.

"I am going," the Swede replied, "but not alone!" and before the pirate could utter a cry of surprise or defend himself, the desperate man rushed upon him, seized him with a giant's strength, and bore him out on the plank.

"Help!" the terrified pirate yelled at the instant,—"help!" and his comrades were hurrying to his assistance, but, forgetting that they were standing on

the board to keep it down, they had hardly quitted their place ere the other end of the plank tilted and, with the men, sank in the waters, which closed over their heads.

The boatswain did his best to rise again to the surface, and the really terrified pirates watched with horror the death struggle going on beneath them in the clear sea; but he might as well have tried to liberate his limbs from the iron clutches of a vice. There was no hope left for the Swede, he knew that only too well, and he mercilessly bore one of his assassins with him to the bottom.

Old Brendall stamped the deck furiously; the boatswain was one of his best hands, and the obstinacy of the captain did not serve to appease him. Leaving him under the charge of two of his men, he went down himself into the cabin to search for the hidden treasure; but the sum of ready money was very trifling, and the cargo, consisting principally of meal and a few short goods, promised them but slight profit.

Returning to the deck again, he threatened the captain once again with the execution of his former menace, but in vain; the Swede adhered to his determination.

"Do what you like with us, dogs that you are!" he cried in furious desperation; "for, even if I gave you up our money, our fate would remain the same,—you would murder us that you might be secure from detection."

"Good! then you shall at least make the journey in company!" the pirate hissed through his teeth; and his whistle brought his accomplices on deck, when they tied the crew, with the captain in the centre,

securely round the still standing mainmast. When this was done, they searched every corner of the vessel, even pulled out the pumps to look whether the Swede had not selected this as the hiding-place for his treasure, but to no purpose ; they found nothing but what lay open in the cupboards, and the fury of the pirates thus deceived, knew no bounds.

"Sail ho!" one of the crew suddenly shouted, and when all eyes were turned in the direction he indicated, they distinctly saw two sail to windward, which were coming up rapidly with the fresh breeze.

Old Brendall took the Swede's glass, which lay on the companion, and, walking up to the skylight, carefully regarded the approaching vessels ; but they did not appear to please him, for he called the mate and told him to look as well. What the two ships were, was soon clear to his crew as well as to that of the captured vessel, for the order to make sail immediately, summoned all the pirates on the deck of the strange vessel.

"And now fire the nest here and then on board!" the captain's voice sounded coldly and fearfully in the ears of the prisoners—"the boys have made us hot, and we will do the same to them."

"Halloo, there, Bill, James, Red-shirt!" the mate's voice was heard above the wild hurrah of the bandits, - "bring the coals out of the caboose, the spars amidships will help us—so, quick, my boys!—we havn't much time to lose."

He had no occasion to repeat the order ; the savage band, rendered furious both by their disappointed hopes and the death of their comrade, soon returned with the coals. Piled up on the deck and covered

with all the wordwork lying loose about, the thick smoke soon rose on high, and when the pirates pushed off their little vessel with wild shouts, the flames burnt vividly, and eagerly seized on all around.

But the *Shark* had no time to lose, for the approaching vessels were distinctly recognised to be men-of-war, by the bold, symmetrical cut of their masts, and their sails. They were a ship of the line and a corvette, of which the latter appeared to be by far the swifter sailer. Those on board the pirate could not be mistaken as to the character of the two vessels, and the corvette, after exchanging a few hurried signals, began the chase, while the man-of-war ran up alongside the burning vessel, to save what could yet be saved.

CHAPTER XI.

MORE SCENES ON BOARD THE PIRATE, AND HOW
FRANK CAME TO A DESPERATE RESOLUTION.

The pursuit. Tom Brendall plays an artful trick. A French merchant-vessel is boarded. The *Shark* rounds Cape Horn. Land ho! The man-of-war steamer. The *Shark's* papers are overhauled. Frank leaps overboard. The Pirate is blown out of the water. Escape of the mate. Death of Tom Brendall.

FRANK, who had been a horrified spectator of the whole fearful scene, under the strict charge of the cook, had really formed an intention to leap overboard, and risk his life in attempting to assist the unhappy Swedish crew. But whether the cook sus-

pected something of the sort, or would not expose him to the temptation, he suddenly seized the boy by the collar, when the schooner had cut the ropes which still bound her to the burning vessel, and led him down into the cabin, where he was compelled to remain, till they had proceeded so great a distance from the spot as to render every attempt to help them fruitless.

The boy's last hope was now in the corvette, from whom the schooner was attempting to escape, and this hope appeared to be confirmed, when night did not take them out of the enemy's reach. Old Brendall steered the same course all night, in the expectation that he would get far enough to windward to render any further pursuit vain. The corvette, however, lay almost as close to the wind as did the schooner, and sailed better, so that the pursuer was soon in dangerous proximity. The light breeze alone favoured the schooner, and the pirate determined to take more advantage of the next night. It had, consequently, scarce set in, ere the old pirate suddenly ordered the man at the wheel, to let her head fall off; they thus ran for about an hour under the protection of the darkness, till they fancied they could no longer be seen from the corvette. The order "to lower all sail" was then given, and five minutes later the *Schooner* lay with naked spars on the water, and slowly drifted to leewards.

The next morning not a sign of a sail was to be seen on the distant horizon, and the pirate vessel steered directly southward with every inch of canvas set.

Frank tried in vain to guess where they were bound for; whether it was that old Brendall did not feel

quite secure in the Atlantic, after the two last and partially unsuccessful crimes, or whether he was desirous of a change of scene; he did not stop again, although they met several sail during the next days, and kept on his southerly course, until they reached a certain latitude below the equator, and the trade winds gradually calmed, when he steered westward, and there was no longer any doubt that he intended to round Cape Horn.

Life on board had, in the meanwhile, become rather monotonous; the crew, who had been informed of their captain's scheme, only performed the absolutely necessary duties, and their hatred of the boy had gradually died away, with the exception of the mate. In the excitement of the last deed, much of the former was forgotten, and a lucky capture, which they made in the latitude of Buenos Ayres, appeared to have restored them their old wild humour.

They came up with and boarded a French merchant vessel, which had considerable sums on board, destined for Monte Video; rich booty fell into their hands, and they contented themselves with scuttling the vessel, and giving the remainder of the crew that had not been killed, a chance of reaching the coast in their boat, or of being taken off by another vessel. What did the villains care, whether the unhappy men might be caught in a pampero and sunk, or else perish from thirst ere they reached a port?

Tom Brendall, however, seemed determined to keep on his original course, in spite of the booty they had made. The weather became cold and stormy; in the vicinity of the Falkland Islands, they were caught in a violent pampero, and a week later they were in snow

and ice, not far from Staaten Island, at the most southerly point of the immense American continent, where the end of the gigantic vertebra, which extends from the Northern Arctic Ocean to the south, under the title of Rocky Mountains, Andes, and Cordillera, stretches out its precipitous cliffs into the foaming, raging sea, and offers a barrier to its power and fury.

With a favourable wind, they rounded the Cape, and, on reaching the Pacific, hurried towards a milder, warmer climate, with all sail set.

Frank had become very melancholy; the sea that washed the shores which he called home, was left far behind, and now, thrown into the midst of a band of criminals, he was drifting hopelessly to ruin. How could he ever succeed in escaping his tortures? could he hope that the arm of the law would ever reach the blood-thirsty villains? And, if it were so, would he not be exposed to the danger of being counted one of them? Who would believe his statement, that he had come on board in ignorance, and was innocent of the blood which the murdering band had shed in streams?

And what would be the end, if he remained any longer an instrument of these men, among whom he would be ruined, body and soul—what would eventually become of him? Ah! his heart bled, when he thought of his poor Helen; what would she have said, if she had known that his first flight into the world had been made on board a pirate?

The time had rapidly slipped away in cruising backwards and forwards, and the ship's log on this day indicated the 24th December.

Christmas!—have you ever, dear reader, spent a

Christmas away from home? I do not wish it to you; I will hope that this cheery, merry season is still passed by you as happily, and free from care, as when you first stretched out your arms towards the glistening light, while seated on your mother's lap. But in that case you do not know how the forest without looks so fearfully quiet and melancholy: how the clouds drift athwart the gloomy sky with such rapidity; how the waves mutter such strange melodies, and rustle, and dash, and foam, as if the solitude around were unendurable. That is the season, when all the pictures of home, alas! so fervently and ardently cherished, however much the storm of life may have submerged them, rise to the surface, and acquire their old, holy power; that is the season when you cannot refrain from tears, even though you have kept them dammed up in their sluices with iron strength—memory taps at the portals of the heart, and you have no occasion to open them, they fly asunder spontaneously. But there she stands, melancholy and mourning, on the threshold, for she has found only thorns on which to lay her head—thorns and nettles alone; and yet on *that* evening she does not again quit her old abode; she stays and weeps, and, on the next morning, girds up her garments, to recommence her desolate journey through life.

Frank had not enjoyed a friendly home: no one had lit the Christmas tree for him, or led him with loving hand to the present-covered table, and the holy eve may even at that time have passed sadly and silently, but still it was *home* that surrounded him, and even that generally gloomy, silent man, his nurse-father, could not find heart on *that* day to say a harsh

word to him, and allowed him to make cakes, and told him stories of the time when he had been himself a child, many long, fearfully long years back.

And now here? their vessel was heaving on the quiet Pacific—the mild balmy breezes of the Southern sea fanned his brow, and the blue sky was begemmed with rich clusters of stars: the gently heaving and falling sea reclined at his feet, and yet his poor, desolate heart felt so wretched, so fearfully wretched, and at times, it even appeared to him, as if he must remain eternally cut off from the rest of the world, from all that was dear to him, the associate of a band of murderers, and the participator in their crimes—and their punishment.

The next days passed equally quietly and sorrowfully, he took no part in what went on around him, and he only felt a painful anxiety, when the look-out in the crosstrees announced a sail—for must he not ever fear a repetition of those scenes of horror? But, for all that, he performed his duties with the utmost punctuality, and had thus re-acquired the captain's good will, although the mate detested him, and made him feel it at every opportunity that offered.

"Land ho!" one of the sailors cried on a fine morning, who had been sent up to repair one of the sails, and when Frank came on deck half an hour later, he could perceive a narrow dark blue strip, which rose just before them, somewhat on the lee. The breeze, however, was so light, that they only made very slight progress, and the evening broke over them before they had reached land. As long as it was dark, they remained under close-reefed sail, for the coral reefs in this neighbourhood are very danger-

ous, and many a good ship has had to pay for her contempt of danger with hull and crew. Before daybreak they, however, set sail again, and when the sun poured its purple beams over the horizon, they had drawn so close to one of these exquisitely beautiful islands, that they could easily distinguish the cocoa-palms on the shore, behind which a long low hill rose.

"Halloo! there's a whaler boiling out her oil over there," the mate suddenly said, who, from old habit, had taken a glimpse round the horizon, "I can see the smoke."

Tom Brendall followed the direction of his finger, observed what the mate called smoke for a little while, and then walked with a shake of his head aft, to fetch the glass, and convince himself. He stood for a long while observing it, then lowered the glass, and said to the mate, who was standing by his side:—

"That's no whaler, that's a steamer, and bearing down on us in the bargain."

"Steamer?" the mate growled, shaking his head incredulously—"where the deuce would a steamer come from in the South Seas? the smoke from the blubber kettles is drifting to leewards, and that, I expect, forms the long strip."

"By God, 'tis a steamer!" the captain asserted, however, and the mate, after examining it attentively, at last said:—

"Well! I don't care, *steamers* are nought to me: when they've got a hole in them, they soon get sick of it—deuce take them all!"

"But if it was a war steamer?" the captain

growled, regarding the strange vessel, which was rapidly overhauling them. "And I really believe it must be one, for what would a merchant or a mail steamer be looking for here, on the frontier of the 'dangerous Archipelago?'"

"And suppose it was a war steamer?" the mate laughed, "our papers are so famously in order, that we can let him overhaul us without danger—that is, supposing he really carries the American flag, or else he won't trouble us much."

"The best for us will be to keep as close to the island as we can," his superior officer remarked thoughtfully, "our papers are famous forgeries, and so far in order, but it's as well to be on the safe side, and the rogues on board such a steamer as that have nothing to do but sniff about everywhere, and poke their noses in wherever they are not wanted. But if we are behind the reefs, or between a couple of the islands, they must leave us alone, and if they don't do it, in the worst case we shall have a chance of escaping them in the narrows. That isn't possible in the open sea."

As the schooner had steered this course all along, she needed to make but a slight alteration; she had set every sail she could carry, and under a fresh breeze they drew nearer and nearer to the coast, which they would be able to reach in a couple of hours, if the wind remained in the same quarter, without danger of being overhauled by the steamer.

The captain, however, had been perfectly in the right; the approaching steamer was really a vessel of war under English colours, sent to the islands to watch the French claims, which had been lately made.

Pirates, too, were at that season by no means rare in those seas—in which they display themselves even now—and the war vessels of all nations were directed to stop and examine all vessels that appeared in any way suspicious.

The *Shark*, however, did not gain the protection of the reefs; the breeze gradually died away; the sails were flapping heavily against the spars, and the sea assumed that leaden, dead lustre, which is so peculiar to it in a calm. They had, however, drawn so near to the reefs, that a bullet would have carried across; and Tom Brendall, though he would gladly have got out of reach of the steamer, did not dare to sail any nearer, as in the perfect calm, the powerful current that always sets westwards in these latitudes, would have driven his vessel on the reefs, where it would have been irrecoverably lost. There was nothing left him but to steer northwards, right in the teeth of the steamer, where the reefs trended to the west, and appeared to afford an entrance; for to the south, they extended in a dense, compact line, and the eye could follow the breakers for a very long distance. This was a most unlucky spot to meet a more powerful enemy; and Tom Brendall shifted his oilskin hat backwards and forwards when his eye turned from the approaching steamer to the threatening reefs.

Frank's heart, however, bounded for joy, when he saw the noble ship gradually approaching, and the idea suddenly occurred to him that, if any officers came on board from her, he would, careless of the consequences, place himself under their protection, and leave this ship and mode of life. Perhaps the mate, who hardly ever took his eyes off him, read it in his

face, or feared something of the sort, for he ordered him down into the fore-castle with one of the crew as guard when a boat was lowered from the steamer's side and rowed towards them, and the warning which the old fellow gave him to keep quiet, told him under what strict inspection he was, and how well his jailers knew that he had a chance for flight and salvation.

The hatch which was drawn over the cabin in bad weather, was now naturally open; a windsail, however, had been inserted in consequence of the heat, to let as much fresh air as possible into the fearfully sweltering room: this occupied nearly the whole of the hatch, and darkened the fore-castle to such a degree, that nothing could be seen in bright day without a light. The lamp, however, was now out, the sailors from the strange vessel should not have a chance of pursuing their investigations there.

Frank soon after heard the schooner hailed, and the drawling tone of the captain's reply, - the name of the *Turtledove* had been again stretched over that of the *Shuck*, and the schooner had once more assumed the innocent, harmless aspect of a yankee trader, who had come into the South Seas to barter all sorts of trinkets for coconut-oil and mother-of-pearl, and purchase spermaceti-oil from the whalers. Frank then distinctly heard the boat draw alongside, the strangers come on deck, and then go below with the captain into the cabin.

Bill, the sailor who was in the fore-castle with the boy, would have gladly seen what was going on, so he pressed against the windsail and remained standing on the steps. The poor boy found himself cut off from any chance of escape, and seated himself

quietly on one of the chests, and gave free and unchecked passage to his tears.

The strangers might have been about half an hour on board, and he could plainly hear the steamer blowing off the steam from her escape-pipes, close by; even the noise of the paddles could be distinguished,—the ship of war could not be a rifle-shot from them.

“At last then,” growled Bill, who was getting tired of the delay, “haven’t they been humbugged enough?—what a set of fools they must be!”

Frank heard the oars shipped in the boat, and she flew past the bows on her way back to the steamer. Bill went on deck to look after her. But a tremendous determination was formed in the boy’s breast,—“Now or never!” he whispered to himself, and he held his heart with both his hands, as if he feared it would burst. But he could not reflect for any length of time, the boat was still only a short distance from the schooner, but every stroke carried it farther away and left him hopelessly behind.

Bill had walked away from the hatch,—the puffing of the windsail told the boy that he had quitted it, but he heard voices on the fore-castle,—a portion of the crew was standing there and looking after the boat. Oh! if he could only have one glance of the sea! But, once possessing the consciousness that he could be free, he was driven to a decisive step by an almost incomprehensible impulse. He drew the knife he wore in his belt, and held it convulsively in his hand; in a second, he tore the shoes from his feet, threw off his jacket, and in a couple of bounds he reached the deck. The path was clear, but the cook and mate were standing near the bulwarks, four or

five others on the forecastle,—he must leap overboard ; even if death threatened him, he must escape ; and with one bound he sprang on the rail.

“ Stop him ! ” Bill shouted, who was standing on the other side and had not noticed him ; “ stop him ! ” and the mate rushed forward at the same moment—his fingers touched his leg, but the terrified, and yet desperate, boy leaped overboard, and a few seconds later the water closed above his head.

The boat was hardly two hundred yards from the schooner when the oarsmen noticed the boy’s leap into the water, and raised their oars in the air, as if at word of command.

“ What’s the matter ? ” the lieutenant in command of the boat asked.

“ Man overboard from the schooner, sir,” one of the sailors said. The lieutenant looked round hurriedly, and a movement of his hand turned the bow of the boat once more towards the schooner, where it was evident that something extraordinary had taken place.

The mate was perfectly mad—he had sprung on the forecastle, and drawing his broad knife from the sheath, hurled it at the head of the boy, who had just risen to the surface. It whizzed harmlessly into the water hardly an inch from his back, and the blood-thirsty fellow, who perceived the imminent danger to which they were exposed, and who only desired revenge on the person he termed a traitor, shouted for a rifle, to blow out the brains of the lad, who was swimming with all his strength towards the strange boat.

Bill tried, at the same time, another method of

terrifying the fugitive, and getting him on board again.

"A shark, Frank—a shark!" he yelled with all his strength; "lay hold of the rope—here it is!"

Frank, however, did not hear the cry, or paid no attention to it, for even the terrible teeth of a shark had lost their horror for the moment. Away, away from here was the only idea that animated him, and almost unconscious, with the sole instinctive feeling of the swimmer to keep himself above water, he cleft his way towards the boat.

"Back!" the officer in the boat ordered; the sixteen oars fell with a crash into the water, and the next moment the sharp bow was impelled towards the swimmer.

"A gun—a gun!" the mate cried, stamping the deck wildly, and one of the crew handed him at the same moment a loaded rifle, just as the boat was approaching the swimmer.

"Halloo, you sir!" the officer shouted to him, on seeing, with extreme surprise, that somebody on board the schooner was really going to fire at the lad; "stop, we'll pick him up, and you can say if he has committed any crime."

The words had scarcely passed his lips when the bright flash left the muzzle, but the frightful excitement in which the mate was, caused him to miss his aim, and the boat had drawn so near, that the bullet struck the identical oar which one of the boatmen held out to the swimmer.

"Hang it all, what's that?" the lieutenant shouted, angrily looking towards the schooner. "Take him into the boat, my men, I'll look after this."

Six nervous arms were stretched out towards the fugitive, but they had scarce raised him out of the water, ere he cried, in a voice almost choked by exhaustion and excitement—

“The *Shark*, sir,—the *Shark*!”

“There’s no shark after you, my poor boy!” said the lieutenant, who naturally supposed that Frank had fancied himself pursued by a monster of the deep; “but a worse foe than that sent a bullet after you.”

“A worse foe?” the boy cried, however, who had by this time been lifted into the boat; “that is the worst!” and, pointing to the schooner, he yelled, in a wild voice—“Away from here—away,—they are pointing their gun at us—that is the *Shark*—that is the *Shark*—that is the terrible pirate who kept me a prisoner as his servant!”

“The *Shark*!” the officer started up quickly, and in surprise. “That the *Shark*! by Heavens! the villains cannot be mad enough to fire on us!” he, however, suddenly added, for a commotion in the bows of the schooner seemed to evince something of this sort, and confirmed the boy’s statement. But before he knew what to do in his state of indecision, whether to return on board the pirate and recommence his investigation on the ground of the present denunciation, or pull hastily on board his own vessel, the pirate himself put a hasty termination to his doubts.

“They are going to fire, by Heavens!” one of the sailors shouted, and almost at the same moment when they saw the yellow flash belch forth from the gun, a ball killed three of the men, and the sea closed over the sinking boat.

A shout of triumph from on board the *Shark*, fol-

lowed the successful shot, but only from a portion of the crew, for old Tom Brendall, who was not yet acquainted with the boy's escape, rushed on deck with a pistol, to shoot down the man who, he fancied, had betrayed his vessel in this manner. But the next moment brought him a much more important task than revenge, for the echo of the shot appeared to be returned from the steamer, and her first ball cut through the peak hallyards, and the mainsail fell with a crash on deck.

Old Brendall was too much of a seaman, and had grown too grey in the school of crime, not to be fully aware that, whatever might have been done to deserve punishment hereafter, there was not a moment now to lose, if he wished to save his ship from the most imminent danger it had ever been in. The contest had been commenced and must now be maintained, for a lucky shot might injure the engines of the enemy's vessel and render them harmless; so, while his first orders referred to the management of the schooner and an attempt to escape in the only way left him, his second pointed the long barrel of the swivel in desperate courage at the steamer, and he had the satisfaction of seeing his iron messenger strike her and scatter the splinters in every direction.

But his triumph was not destined to last long, for while the ship was steered towards the reef, a heavy broadside poured from the steamer's side, and ere the sound reached their ear a ball dismounted the swivel, while another wounded the foremast so severely that the pressure of the sails immediately dragged it over the lee-side.

The *Shark* was a wreck, and a second broadside,

which struck her in several places between wind and water, completed the work of destruction.

“Halloo, my boys!” old Brendall yelled, whose fury increased with the danger that menaced him; “gather round me, we’ll show the villain that we can die like men, and don’t intend to ornament his yard-arm; he can fetch us if he wants to have us. Confound it all, I only wish I could put a second shot into the other boat.”

This boat, to which he alluded, had been lowered from the steamer’s side, almost at the same moment that the first was sunk, and was now picking up the sailors with the boy, who were floating on the drifting fragments.

“We can cut them off, perhaps, with the gig,” cried the mate, springing to the davits with four of the crew; “they have no arms with them, and, heavily laden as they are, they could not defend themselves.”

“That’s madness!” the captain said; while the mate, however, was lowering the boat and taking muskets out of the arm-chest, “let the boat be; who knows if we can’t use it in securing our safety?”

“We know all that!” the mate replied, with a laugh; and while the men, with whom he had spoken before, there was no doubt, climbed down like cats and pushed off the boat, he leaped after them, and the direction in which he steered proved only too soon that he was by no means inclined to engage in such an insane contest with the other heavily manned boat, but meant to seek safety in flight and shamefully desert the companions upon whom he had brought this dreadful catastrophe.

“Dog!” the captain shouted in his fury, on guess-

ing the intention of his first officer, and springing to his arm-chest, he took up a musket and fired at the runaway. The ball grazed the mate's arm, and passed through the side of the boat, and ere Tom Brendall could take up another gun the sharply-built gig was out of gunshot, and soon after disappeared among the breakers on the reefs, into which it elst its way.

The steamer had, in the mean time, come up, and the pirate was summoned to surrender.

Old Brendall, in answer, fetched a white ensign and hoisted at the gaff, but when a boat pushed off from the steamer to take possession of the pirate, they were received with a heavy fire of musketry, which killed seven or eight of them.

This horrible treachery was answered by a broadside, and when the smoke dispersed the pirate vessel was seen slowly sinking. But only very few of the band could be picked up alive by the boats sent out for the purpose: even in the water they fought with their knives like maniacs. They knew what fate awaited them, and preferred an honourable death in the water to that which would have been the only too well merited reward of their deeds on board the ship of war.

Old Brendall had put an end to his existence with a pistol-shot.

CHAPTER XII.

A VISIT TO THE TONGA ISLANDS, AND HOW FRANK
"EXCHANGED A CHIEFTAIN FOR A NATURALIST."

Frank's illness. He makes new friends. The English naturalist. -
The Tonga Islands. The chieftain's costume. The medicine-
man. Matters grow alarming. Frank's presence of mind.
Exchange of prisoners.

THE fearful excitement of the last few hours had, however, been too much for the boy: he was attacked with a violent fever, and hovered for many a weary week between life and death on board the steamer, where he was treated with the utmost kindness. His good constitution at length gained the victory over the weakness of his body—in the balmy climate of these zones the air did its part as well, and he regained, although slowly, his perfect health.

When he was so far restored as to be able to answer the questions addressed to him without danger, and recal before his mind's eye the past scenes of suffering, he was invited to give the captain a faithful report of the character of the mysterious schooner, and he did so as comprehensively as he was able.

He now learned, too, that a boat, with five men in it, had escaped among the reefs, and they had not been found, in spite of the continued search made after them. It was very possible, too, that they had been lost among the breakers, for the fragments of a

boat had been seen by the steamer's crew drifting about among the small coral islands.

Frank was, as it were, born again; but although the captain kindly offered to employ him as steward, until he could land him in England or America, he was so sick of a seafaring life, through the misery he had endured on board the pirate, that he earnestly begged to be landed at the first European settlement they might touch at.

The captain willingly promised him this; but told him that the spot would be some distance off, as he had coaled only a few weeks before in Valparaiso, and was now bound direct for the East Indian settlements, which he intended to reach as soon as possible. The only place he would stop at *en route* was Java, to deliver despatches to the English consul: if he liked, he would leave him there, and he would find plenty of countrymen who would be willing to take him into their service, on the captain's recommendation.

Frank had no choice left him but a voyage to India, and found very soon that he had no cause to repent having been taken aboard the *Flying Fish*; for he was not only treated in the kindest manner by the crew, who listened to his stories of piratical life with extreme interest and many a hearty curse; but he also formed the acquaintance of a person who was as agreeable as he was useful to him.

There was a naturalist aboard the steamer, who had been given a passage to Samarang, in Java, by the English Government, in order to travel about the interior for a time, and collect specimens. He soon so much loved the boy, for his open, true-hearted manner, that he begged him to remain with him; and Frank

himself felt quite attracted to the little thin man, who told such capital stories, and had seen so much of the world. In a very short time they were on such friendly terms, that Frank told him the whole history of his life, simple enough, up to the last year; and as his clear blue eye was the best guarantee of his truth, Mr. Evans—that was the naturalist's name—determined on keeping him with him as long as he liked to stop.

The steamer had in the meanwhile made rapid progress in the quiet waters of these seas, under an almost perfect calm; but the heat, as well as a wish to interrupt the monotony of such a long voyage, induced the captain to approach the islands and stop at one of them, to take fruit on board. Leaving the Navigators' Islands on the starboard side, they held a west-south-west course, and soon after sighted an island on the horizon, which the captain of the steamer stated was Vavaoo, the most northerly of the Friendly Islands.

They lay to during the night, and on the next morning soon approached the reefs, from which a whole swarm of canoes filled with men put out to meet them.

But though the islanders were glad to see a ship and do some trading with her, they had scarcely drawn near enough to perceive the wheels, which were lashing the water with tremendous force, than they again pulled to land in violent haste, unloaded their canoes as if their life depended on it, dragged them up the bank, and then fled to the bushes. They certainly believed that they had escaped some terrible danger.

But this did not suit Captain Ellis's purpose, and

he ordered a boat out, which took small articles for barter, and which Mr. Evans and Frank were allowed to go in. They had been watched from shore; but when the boat left the steamer's side and approached the coast, the islanders knew that they had nothing to fear from *that*, and came down to the shore to receive them. They did not appear nearly so friendly ~~as~~ when they were standing in their graceful canoes and waving green branches: matters were now entirely changed. At first *they* wished to visit the white men, and must consequently ask their permission, and gain their good-will: but now the white men were coming to them, and it was their business to say whether the meeting should be amicable or hostile—the big ship was still firing up into the air (they regarded the pipe through which the steam was let off as a species of extraordinary cannon), and could not do them much harm in that way.

It was a stately band of warriors that awaited their approach—savage, almost naked, tattooed forms, with long wooden weapons of attack, bows nine and ten feet in length, and arrows four feet long, very sharp and armed with hooks: many of them, again, with heavy, strangely-carved war-clubs in their hands, and their heads decorated with feathers and flowers, according to the aboriginal custom. At first it appeared as if they intended to prevent the strangers landing; at least they collected close to the spot which the boat was steering for, and the motions they made with their lances and clubs looked anything but friendly and peaceable. In truth, they would have willingly bartered with the white men on board their own vessel, but did not feel at all disposed to let them

land, as they had already experienced too much misfortune from the visits of the white men, and probably did not wish to expose themselves voluntarily to it again.

The officer in command of the boat would naturally not land on an island whose inhabitants had often given proofs what hostile sentiments they entertained towards Europeans, without having his men well armed; but he had received strict orders from the captain not to use fire-arms unnecessarily, and only to shed blood in self-defence. He therefore now tried to come to an amicable understanding, and advancing to the bows and standing upright, he waved a white handkerchief as a symbol of amity.

The sailors, in the meanwhile, lay on their oars, to await the effect which the friendly salutation might have on the islanders, and, in fact, a very peculiar movement commenced among them. They collected together in various mobs, and if one party was for the landing of the strangers, another opposed it, and it was especially the latter who swung their spears and war-axes, and made a fearful uproar.

Suddenly the crowd gave way, and there appeared upon the white coral sand of the beach the most extraordinary personage Frank had ever set eyes on, or imagined in his dreams. He was one of the tallest and most powerfully-built warriors on the island, towering nearly half a foot above the rest, who were generally tall men, but dressed in the most wondrous fashion that taste could devise.

Instead of the tapa apron—a stuff which the women form out of the bark of certain trees—and which nearly all the others wore round their loins, he had

thrust both legs through the arm-holes of a waistcoat, the back being in front, and, as they saw afterwards, carefully fastened behind with a row of polished brass buttons; as a species of breastplate, he wore a pair of stays, probably obtained from some shipwrecked vessel, and fastened behind with coir rope, as it did not entirely surround his person; round his neck he wore a pair of braces, and on one foot a boot, on the other a splendidly embroidered slipper, which the salt water, however, had treated scurvily. The most beautiful and interesting thing about him was his head-dress, an old gray beaver hat, pressed into every possible shape, in whose crown a hole had been made, to permit the insertion of a quantity of feathers, which fluttered like a helmet-plume in the fresh breeze.

Frank looked at Mr. Evans, and was almost bursting with laughter; but the latter, who had probably been present at ceremonies of a similar nature, nodded to him, with great alarm, to keep quiet, and remain serious, as any ridicule of the chieftain at this moment might entail the worst consequences. Frank might possibly have felt this, and held his head down; he could not possibly look at the figure and remain serious; but even in this posture the ill-treated waistcoat and the stays rose before him, and when he at last took a rapid glance at the spot where the proud chieftain was standing in all his majesty and splendour, and even turned round to display his qualities from another point of view, he could endure it no longer. First he giggled to himself, and then the long-suppressed boyish merriment burst its bounds, let him struggle against it as he would. And he was

not unsupported in it; for the sailors scarcely heard the well-known sound, when neither subordination, nor fear of eventual punishment, could keep them in order, and a burst of unanimous laughter sounded over the sea.

The islanders started up at the moment furiously, and the old chieftain raised his lance, which he had till then carried sloping like a musket on his shoulder; but it was of no use—the sight was too comical, and the crew *could* not restrain themselves. At first the lieutenant tried to check them, and draw their attention to the danger which they exposed themselves to; but his eye fell on the savage as he was turning round, and it was all over with his own seriousness—he laughed till the tears ran down his cheeks.

But that which hours of negotiation could not have effected, this involuntary merriment on the part of the sailors brought about at once. The islanders certainly held their ground for a while, and cast furious glances at the laughing pale-faces; but their own merry light-hearted temper would not suffer them to remain serious for long in such jolly society, and the chieftain, strange to say, struck the key-note. First he regarded the strangers, then his own band, and his mouth was expanded to a still wider grin; his eyes opened to their fullest extent, and at last he *haha'd* as furiously and heartily as the worst of the sailors, which was naturally the signal for an outbreak on the part of the islanders.

Mr. Evans was the only one who remained serious; but explained it afterwards as caused by a bad lip, which he did not wish to injure by any excessive use.

The warriors, just before so savage, quickly laid aside their arms, as if any further ceremonies were abolished by this little interlude; and while a part of them sprang into the water, to drag the boat nearer the beach, the others hurried back to fetch the fruits they had recently brought on land—bananas, pine-apples, papayas, cocoa-nuts, bread-fruit, and oranges, which they wished to barter.

The old chieftain played a most important part in this proceeding, for he not only regulated the price of the fruits, but also the value of the articles offered in exchange, and his verdict was peremptory; it was irrevocable, let the strangers protest against it as much as they pleased. Mr. Evans alone appeared to have any influence over them, as he understood a little of their language. They were highly delighted that a white man called the things by the same names as they did, and even if he could not alter the prices, still they loaded him with presents. Thus, among other things, they brought a large calabasse, filled with tamarinds, which he was excessively fond of; and when he gave the chieftain, as a mark of gratitude, his penknife and watch-key, the savage felt so affected by it, that he fell upon the little man's neck, and, as a mark of his sincere affection, *rubbed noses with him*.

This is a custom very much practised in all the South Sea islands, and it is the sign of the most disinterested affection, when they take hold of each other, and rub their noses together with traces of heartfelt emotion in their features. Mr. Evans was compelled to go through this ceremony *nolens volens*, while holding the calabasse under his left arm, and

did it with a face which it would be difficult to describe, but which threatened the crew with hysterics.

This time, however, the old chieftain was offended by their presumption; seizing a couple of oranges which lay near him on the beach, he hurled them with remarkable precision and most excellent effect at the heads of the two noisiest, and ordered them to return to their boat, by gestures which they could not misinterpret, and with a loud menacing voice.

Having now settled the fruit business, the lieutenant would have willingly returned to his vessel, for the natives were becoming very importunate, and had made several attempts to steal trifles from the sailors. But here a most unforeseen difficulty presented itself, for the chieftain Te-ta-i-ta, as he was repeatedly called by the islanders, had suddenly formed such an intense attachment for their little naturalist, whom he asserted he intended to make his medicine-man and physician, that he stated the boat could return to the vessel as soon as they pleased, but the old matabooles or councillors had decided (though not a soul had spoken on the subject), that the little pale-face should become their physician; and Taaroatuihono (one of their Esculapian deities) had conducted him to these shores, where he would become a great man and a chieftain.

But though all this was highly flattering to the little naturalist, it did not appear to be equally agreeable to him. In fact, he had a strong suspicion that the treacherous natives intended to roast him, rather than make him their physician—the former being besides much easier than the latter; for who can tell

the taste of such people, who perhaps might prefer bones and gristle to wholesome fat?

The lieutenant at first laughed at the idea, for he fancied the old chieftain was having a bit of fun. But Te-ta-i-ta did not appear in any way inclined for jesting, for he ordered two of his people to secure the white doctor, and then signed to the strangers to get into their boat. The Indians at the same time reassumed a very threatening aspect, seized their long spears, bows and arrows, and brandished their war-clubs in anything but a friendly manner: it seemed that they could scarcely be restrained from falling on the Europeans, and the officer was compelled to think of the safety of his party, however much he desired to avoid hostilities.

His hurried orders soon brought all the sailors out of the boat: while two of the crew, well armed, remained in the boat, the others jumped into the water, which was hardly knee-deep, and waded to land, where they drew up in two rows, quietly and silently. They were rough-looking fellows, these sailors, as they stood naturally and yet defiantly by the side of a guard of stiff marines, who had been sent to defend the boat; and the order was so suddenly executed, that the Indians at first actually fancied that the strangers had commenced hostilities. Two arrows whizzed over their heads, one of which stuck into the ground, and the other glanced off the barrel of a musket. At the same time, however, they gradually retired, keeping the little naturalist in the centre, and Mr. Evans clung like grim death to his calebasse, while Te-ta-i-ta remained in the rear of the band, and walking up and down proudly, commenced a long speech,

in which he probably sung his own praises, and ridiculed the Europeans.

Frank was the only person who had remained, and quite unnoticed too, between the hostile bands; for, uncertain whether to follow his new friend among the Indians, or place himself under the protection of the sailors, he remained seated on the old spot, looking in turn at either party. The savages, however, were gradually retreating with their prisoner, and Te-ta-i-ta appeared inclined to execute a war-solo dance in ridicule of the whites, not five paces from the boy. He naturally saw the latter, but as he was sitting on the ground perfectly unarmed, he considered it much beneath his dignity to honour him with more than a casual glance.

"My boys!" the officer said to his men, "there will be nothing left but to attack them, or else they'll carry the little man off bodily, and we mustn't allow that—but don't fire till I give you the word—make ready to charge!"

The sailors levelled their muskets with their bayonets mounted, and Te-ta-i-ta, on hearing the rattle of the fire-arms, stopped in his dance for a moment with outstretched legs, and with his back turned towards Frank, listened attentively. It struck the boy that this was the very moment to execute a *coup de main*, and in a second, before either the sailors or the Indians, least of all Te-ta-i-ta himself, could imagine what he intended to do, he sprung up, and throwing his whole weight in the jump, he thrust his head close beneath the buttoned waistcoat, between the chieftain's legs, and, at the same time, lifted him off his feet.

The effect was magical, for the chieftain threw up

his arms, and, losing his balance, fell backwards with his whole length on the top of the boy, and the lieutenant, taking advantage of the opportunity, ordered his men to advance. Before the savages could prepare for a rush, Te-ta-ita was in the hands of the pale-faces, and as they soon put him on his legs again, they employed him as a shield, to prevent them from firing a shower of arrows and darts, which would have struck the old man first.

The whole affair had now assumed such a different aspect, that the natives at first appeared to be in doubt whether they had not better retire with their captive. But whether the old chieftain began to doubt that Taaroatuihono had really sent the little man for their benefit, or that he did not wish the island to derive the exclusive benefit, while he was dragged off a hostage, without sharing in it; in fine, his cry, a sharp piercing yell, suddenly checked the islanders in their progress, and after a few shouts had been interchanged, a small deputation of unarmed men came up, bringing with them the naturalist and his calabasse, but, at the same time, a great quantity of fruits, and splendidly-carved arms and other ornaments.

The lieutenant went toward them, though not out of reach of the bayonets, took the little man by the hand, and then signed to his people to let the chieftain at liberty, but refused the fruits and weapons, under the idea that the savages wished to recommence a barter. The savages, however, obstinately refused to take them back with them, and as the whites could not understand what had produced this unexpected liberality, Mr. Evans was compelled to play the inter-

preter. He caused the Indians to repeat it to him twice, and then would not afford the required explanation, although it could be seen from his face that he understood what they meant. At last, however, he was forced to confess; and the white men again broke out in shouts of laughter, when Mr. Evans, with a rather embarrassed look, explained to them, that the red scoundrels considered it beneath their dignity to exchange so great a chieftain for such a little; insignificant man on equal terms, and regarded the added matters not in the light of a present, but as a ransom properly accruing to the white men—the Indian was worth *at least* that much more.

An armed boat had, in the meanwhile, been sent off from the steamer, when the captain had noticed the threatening movements of the islanders with his glass, and the lieutenant, who had the naturalist's ransom carried into his boat by the Indians themselves, slowly retired. The boat was then set afloat, and the crew waded out up to their waists, when one half got in and arranged their arms, while the others waded still further out, and then followed their example, under cover of the muskets. The marines remained standing, while the sailors seized their oars, and five minutes later they were out of reach of any arrow—even if the Indians had entertained hostile intentions towards them.

The latter, however, were standing on the beach; dancing in high glee, and in front of them all, Te-ta-i-ta displayed his majesty, stamping the coral sand with his naked feet, and swinging the club, so that the feathers in his hat fluttered backwards and forwards in the breeze.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CORAL REEFS AND THE CORAL INSECT—ARRIVAL
AT JAVA.

A man overboard. Description of the coral reefs. The *Flying Fish* arrives at Java. The landing. Life in the Dutch hotels. Various nations represented. Departure for the interior.

THE deeply-laden boat slowly approached the steamer, where the crew were waiting in readiness to take the fruit on board. Ropes were let down to draw up the bananas and baskets of oranges and sweet potatoes, while others threw the cocoa-nuts up to their comrades on deck, laughing and telling anecdotes about the events on the island.

The lieutenant went straight to the quarter-deck, to give his report to the captain, in which he spoke in high terms of praise of the lad, who through his well-judged and bold intervention, had not only prevented great loss of blood, but, in all probability, saved Mr. Evans's life.

Frank, in the mean time, was standing on the deck, to receive the weapons which Mr. Evans handed up, until they came to the calabasse with the tamarinds. Now, whether the little man fancied it too heavy for the lad, or did not wish to trouble him with it, he called his servant, a little perfectly round Malay, who had accompanied him on all his travels, to take charge of the precious article. The latter, in obedience to the summons, jumped on to the rail, and bent down to

seize the calebasse with both hands, which Mr. Evans, who was standing in the exterior bow of the boat, handed up to him. But when an accident is fated to happen, the greatest precaution cannot prevent it: the Malay had either not considered the calebasse so heavy, or had not taken the proper steps to secure his footing—but the result remained the same.

"Have you got it?" Mr. Evans asked from the boat; and his face grew quite red from the exertion of holding up the heavy calebasse in the air.

"Got him all right, Tuwan!" the Malay cried; and at the next moment, as his master removed his arm, he was dragged overboard by the weight, and the waves not only closed over his head, but the eyes of the astonished sailors could follow him, as he disappeared in the "purple gloom" below.

"Bless my soul!" said the little botanist, clapping his hands together—"Where is he gone with the tamarinds?"

"You'd better ask where the tamarinds are going with him," the boatswain asked, who had watched the whole scene from above. "If he don't let go, he'll cast anchor in fifty fathoms water."

All now pressed anxiously to the spot where the little Malay had disappeared, and looked silently down into the depths.

"There he is!" a voice suddenly exclaimed.

"Where?"

"There, below! at a great depth—there he comes!"

And a round object came up from beneath, like a large bright green bubble—for the salt water gives a peculiar hue to any strange object in it—drew nearer and nearer to the light of day, and became darker the

higher it rose, until at last the head of the Malay appeared above water, and was speedily followed by the half of his body.

"Help!" he cried, just as he was sinking again, and the water filled his widely-opened mouth; but a couple of powerful hands had already clutched his thick black hair, and a few seconds later the fat little Malay lay on the deck, puffing like a young sperm whale; but the tamarinds had disappeared. Fortunately for the Malay, the handle of the calebasse had parted, or he would really have followed it to the bottom; for he held the latter still closely clenched in his hand, and when he was quite recovered, it took some trouble ere he could be induced to part with it.

The *Flying Fish*, now amply laden with fruit and vegetables, continued her voyage without further delay westward, ran between the New Hebrides and Solomon's Islands, and passed the dangerous reefs and rocks of Torres Straits, where they were forced to anchor for three nights in succession, before they reached the open waters of the Indian seas.

But we have talked so much to the reader about the coral reefs of these islands, that we cannot refrain, while in the Torres Straits, which separate Northern Australia from New Guinea, and where these coral reefs and formations are displayed in their strangest varieties, from saying a few words about their composition and peculiarities.

The coral tree rises perpendicularly from the sea—and frequently at places where there is a depth of above 400 fathoms, or 2,400 feet—to the surface, but never above it, and extends its branches in every direction. The coral is a soft and very porous stone, of a

dirty white or brown hue, about whose origin philosophers are not yet quite agreed. The most probable idea is, certainly, that the tree, or the mass resembling a tree, is produced by a little insect, which forms its cells out of a certain juice, or some other material; and by piling up one cell after the other in an extraordinary manner, produces in time those gigantic, irregular, incomprehensible masses, of which not only the reefs, but even a majority of the islands, in the Southern Seas, are composed.

Others assert that the coral tree, or this mass, which extends with such extraordinary rapidity, grows like any other plant, and is *not* formed by the insect; and this assertion is supported by the appearance of the coral, and especially by the nature of the insect itself, as the latter can only exist to a depth of thirty feet, and not lower. If this were really the case, the coral would form the transition between the vegetable and mineral world, and is only employed by the coral insect, which is certainly found in it, and takes up its abode in pores which already existed, but were not *formed* by it.

However this may be, these coral masses are visible at the entrance of Torres Straits, where they form a perfect wall, called "The Barriers," only leaving here and there a narrow entrance; and while on their eastern border, where they are washed by the Pacific, they do not afford safe anchorage within a stone's throw on the west, they form a close mass of partly barren, partly forest-covered islands, between which vessels seek their passage slowly, and are forced to anchor every night, generally in from five to fifteen fathoms water.

Many of these islands, like the majority in the Southern Sea, have a volcanic origin, and, strange to say, the greater part of them display a similar primitive formation, as the mountains in their centre have a decided tendency to run from west to east.

This tendency is most clearly traceable in the Ladrone, Caroline, and Mulgrave Islands, and a glance at the map proves that they are not only connected westwards with the New Hebrides, Feejee, Friendly, Navigator's, and Society Islands,—and behind these slope off into the flat coral islands of the dangerous Archipelago or Pomatu group,—but also to the east they maintain their connection with the East-Indian Archipelago as far as Luçon, throwing out branches through the long insular chain of Timor, Flores, Sumbaye Lomok, Bali, Java, Sumatra, and thence into the Peninsula of Malacca. The last-mentioned are a nearly uninterrupted chain of still active volcanoes, whose former super-aqueous connection can still be clearly distinguished, for the sea, under the effect of the monsoons, only broke through at the places where it found the least resistance; and the still existing sub-aqueous fire-sources possess safety-valves, which expel the collected volcanic elements—just according as the mass lies further eastward or westward—either in the Sandwich Islands, at Hawaii, on Java by means of the Gebè, or else in Sumatra.

The reader, however, must not fancy that all these islands are exclusively coralline. The islands of the East-Indian Archipelago, with mountains of more than 11,000 feet in height, are nearly all of volcanic origin. Upon many of them the craters are still in terrible activity; on others they are burnt out and cold,

but revealing their origin in form and strata; and others again resemble a mass of stone and lava, which has been convulsed by subterranean fire, perhaps by an earthquake, and only reveal, in their lava masses and burnt rocks, the former desolation of the destructive element, though they are now covered by luxuriant vegetation, and a strata of loam.

Still a great quantity of islands in the South Seas are composed entirely of coral, generally displaying, however, a crater-like form, as long and narrow strips of coral begird deep lagoons or lakes, and force the observer almost involuntarily to fancy he is standing above the summit of old sunken volcanoes, whose features are clearly and faithfully traced on the surface of the sea by the coral-tree, which occupies the edge of the crater as a pedestal.

But the most peculiar formation of the coral is revealed in the reefs, which surround nearly all the islands—we might say all, without exception—at a distance of about a mile or half a mile, and over which the sea incessantly breaks. They generally rise to the surface of the water, and thus provide the islands with a broad belt of perfectly still water, let the sea beyond rage and storm as much as it pleases, in which the islanders not only carry on their fishery unimpeded, but are also enabled to maintain a constant and always certain connection with the different portions of their island.

At a spot where a little stream of sweet water pours down from the hills, and mingles with the salt water, these corals, for which pure and unmixed salt water is a necessity of existence, form deep and convenient passages for ships, which frequently widen out

into large and spacious havens within the reefs, and usually in the vicinity of the stream of fresh water. On the other hand, however, there are many islands which do not possess this convenience, and consequently are utterly inaccessible to larger vessels.

Within these reefs, the depth of the water often varies from many fathoms to scarcely a foot; at one spot, the deep blue sea appears fathomless, while, close by, the light coral ground is visible, covered, as it were, with a crystalline case, out of which the wondrously-twisted branches and trees rise up, and little fishes, glistening with all the colours of the rainbow—conscious of the security of the hiding-place—dart backwards and forwards through the jagged, irregular, flower-laden masses.

But this will be enough, dear reader, to give you a cursory idea of the corals and reefs, for whole volumes would be requisite to describe all the wonders of that world.

The *Flying Fish*, then, passed these dangerous islands safely and rapidly, and when she felt the deep, calm waters of the Timor Sea beneath her keel, they continued their voyage without further adventure, passed through Bali's Straits, leaving the tall mountain of the same name to the right, and running along the northern coast of Java, reached Samarang, after a passage of five weeks since leaving the Feejee islands.

As soon as they arrived, Mr. Evans went ashore immediately, accompanied by Frank, and put up at one of the Dutch hotels, where Frank found himself transplanted into a new and most unexpected world. Never accustomed to actual luxury, or even to the

greater conveniences of life, he here found himself, as it were, by magic, surrounded by persons and things which appeared to him quite fabulous.

As a white man, he was regarded by this mixture of Malays and Chinese as a higher being, and he found himself not only freed from performing those services which he had done for others, and that too with the best will, but four or five coloured servants always ready to do them for himself. On the first day the whole scene had the double attraction of novelty, to which he yielded with delight, and was not even able to realize and comprehend its most prominent features. He was surrounded by a confused medley of languages and forms, which would have required weeks to distinguish and regard in their reality; but after the first day the servile readiness of the Malays began to grow disagreeable to him, and he debarred himself from many things, which it would have cost him only a word to obtain, that he might not be pained by seeing four or five men rush forward to obey his commands.

He was most surprised at the Chinese, with their wide, short, cotton trowsers and jackets, their bare heads and long pigtailed, their clumsy shoes, and comical, though crafty-looking eyes. Wherever he glanced, he saw this busy, active, indefatigable race of beings: here they were traders standing in their strangely ornamented shops, and chattering the half-unwilling purchaser into buying things he did not want—there smiths, tailors, and cobblers, who were standing naked to the waist in their hovels, or sitting to ply their needle or hammer with untiring industry. At another place he saw them as bakers, then as fire-work makers, or marching through the streets as

hawkers, with baskets depending from a heavy pole balanced on their shoulder—as gamblers and opium-sellers, as actors in tall bamboo booths; in short, as everything which can be conceived busy and active in our world—but never idle, never lazy.

Frank, however, had not much time to look round him in the town, for Mr. Evans, through an invitation he received from a large coffee-planter in the interior, had a famous opportunity to hunt in the mountains, and he had no idea of letting it slip. Frank was to accompany him.

Travelling in Java is very comfortable: dragged along in the softly-cushioned *carreta*, by four small but active ponies at a hand gallop, the traveller sees the magnificent scenery of this splendid country fly past him. Every five paals (the paal is not quite an English mile) there is a post station where the horses are changed, and that without delay, for the Malay grooms are standing with the ready harnessed horses under a portico, and the spring carriage soon rattles again along the splendid broad post-road.

The Dutch know how to make themselves comfortable, and other nations might take a lesson from them with advantage, if it is absolutely necessary so greatly to effeminate the body by the avoidance of the slightest exertion.

CHAPTER XIV.

HOW FRANK WENT HUNTING WILD BULLS IN THE
JAVA MOUNTAINS, AND WAS HIMSELF HUNTED
IN TURN.

The coffee plantation. Hunting the wild oxen. The procession travelling through the jungle. The mountain lake. A savage bull. An unpleasant dilemma. Frank takes to water. The value of presence of mind. Miraculous escape. Death of the bull. The hunting encampment. Return to the plantation.

IN a few hours they arrived at the little village of Bahadan, where they had no great distance to reach Herr Foelen's coffee plantation. The scenery here was magnificent : leaving the tropical climate behind them the higher they ascended, they found the cocoa-palm no longer flourishing, or at least bearing no fruit, and rarely rising to any height. But they had reached the district of the fern palms and of the wild pisang, with its broad rustling leaves ; immense oaks raised their majestic light-grey trunks, like gigantic pillars, and covered with a dense dark-green foliage ; chattering monkeys climbed about with yells and cries or extraordinary howls among the boughs, or sprang from branch to branch ; while the black, red, and yellow pepper bird sailed with heavy flapping wings through the forest, or whetted its beak upon the bough where it had settled.

Mynheer Foelen received the two Europeans in the most cordial manner, but scarcely allowed them to

rest on the first day, as they would require two days for the purposed hunt on the Urarang, and on the third must be back in Bahadan to be present at some Indian festivities and games, which they could not be allowed to miss. Resting therefore on that day, to be prepared for the fatigues of the next, they got their fire-arms in readiness, and started at daybreak for the desolate passes of the Urarang, where wild oxen and stags were found, and at times a royal tiger, which not unfrequently burst on the settlement, and killed and carried off cattle and even men.

A few weeks back a magnificent fellow of this genus, which had assailed and dragged off a Malay, had been captured in a pitfall, and was preserved for the festivities about to take place.

The most interesting sport, however, would be the pursuit of the bantings or wild oxen, and Frank was astonished at the crowd of Malays, whom their hospitable host appeared to have summoned from the whole neighbourhood. From every side they flocked in with their short but sharp klewangs—a peculiar kind of short sword, or long knife—and were with equal rapidity loaded with provisions, guns, tents, and all sorts of things. Frank found the whole affair very comical, on seeing the preparations made here for a hunt of two days, while an American hunter, with his blanket on his back, and some dried venison wrapped in it, with his knife at his side, his rifle on his shoulder, and, at the most, accompanied by a good dog, wanders about for months in the woods, and kills the bear and the panther, the deer and the turkey.

But when you are at Rome you must do as the Romans do; in India it is imagined that you can neither travel nor hunt, without tormenting yourself with a swarm of servants; and this circumstance would ruin sport, were there not such an immensity of game in the dense forests, that something must be continually started, let the hunters make as much noise as they please.

At eight o'clock the procession started, the sportsmen on horseback, accompanied by ten or twelve mounted Javanese, and a number of coolies, or servants, on foot, but always at a sharp trot, in their rear. On leaving the house they quitted the broad, convenient road, and followed a narrow path, which led them, for at least eight pails, through nothing but coffee-gardens.

But you must not imagine, dear reader, that these coffee-gardens were a row of restaurants, with wooden benches and little arbours, in front of which blue sign-boards, with golden letters, announce that which busy waiters, with carefully curled locks, and very short jackets, carry about within; no, the whole was forest and thicket, at the first hurried glance, and it was not till they had advanced some distance, that the regularly planted trees, and ground cleared from weeds, indicated the coffee-plantations, or the coffee-gardens, as they are called here, with some propriety.

After passing these gardens the actual forest commenced; a narrow pathway led through wild raspberry bushes, pisang and fern-palms, continually shaded by the luxuriant vegetation, till it suddenly terminated in alang-alang, or oziers and thorns, near the little low bamboo hut of a Javanese.

Now, the servants commenced their task, for they cut down the jungle with their sharp klewangs, and the horsemen followed slowly in single file. The men, while doing this, made such a row, that it would be hopeless to think of finding any game, until they at last reached a more open glade, and Mr. Evans declared that he would dismount and hunt on foot. The principal object of their expedition was, indeed, a little lake high up in the mountains, probably the crater of some exhausted volcano, round whose shores the bantings generally congregated; and as they were no longer at any great distance from it, Herr Foelen at length yielded to the prayers of the little Englishman, and himself got down from his horse, a thing which he was not particularly fond of doing. This also rendered it possible to get rid of a number of their noisy followers, who were ordered by the Dutchman to prepare the night encampment at a spot well known to them; and with proportionately very little noise,—though still sufficient to drive away any timid game,—they continued their expedition with only about six times more attendants than they actually required.

At length they reached the spot whence they would be able to survey the small mountain lake, and Mr. Evans insisted that only those should advance who were armed with guns; if the others were wanted, they could easily be brought up. Mynheer Foelen shook his head, but at last acquiesced, and Frank was sent forward with one of the Javanese, who carried fire-arms, to reconnoitre.

The two glided gently and noiselessly on—for the Javanese, fortunately, was one of the more silent men

of his race—and at length reached a small clearing, whence they could survey the glistening lake, which was covered with myriads of wild-fowl. But these were not the objects they were in search of, and Frank had strained his eyes in vain without seeing any large animal on the shores of the lake breaking the dark verdure of the swampy meadows or ozier-beds opposite to them. Suddenly the Javanese nudged him cautiously, and with the whispered words, “Miri, miri!” (see, see) he pointed to a spot in the lake just opposite them, and which had not hitherto attracted the boy’s attention. The Javanese persisted, and at length a dark object moved in the water, and Frank clearly distinguished seven dark bodies, which were standing in the water, apparently to cool their sides, and now and then throwing up the water with their snouts.

These were the bantings, and their plan of action was quickly formed. Returning to the others, they gave a report of the game they had seen, and by Herr Foelen’s advice they formed two parties, each of five men—Mr. Evans and Frank with three, Mynheer Foelen with four, Javanese—in order to creep round the lake, which was not more than half a mile in diameter, and, if possible, catch the bantings while yet in the water.

Evans and Frank started immediately, for the longer but more open route was allotted to them, and refused to take any one else with them; but Foelen sent for eight or ten of his coolies to cut a path, and they proposed to meet again on the opposite bank of the lake.

They could, however, only advance very slowly, for

although this portion of the forest was called "open," it was so covered with every description of underwood and creeping plants, that it was quite impossible to keep a direct course. The most terrible thickets were formed by the rattan, better known to the German reader by the incorrect or, at least, antiquated name of "Spanish cane" (as the Spaniards probably brought the first specimen from their Transatlantic settlements to Europe). It is a creeping plant, in the most comprehensive sense of the term, for with its reed-like leaves it stretches in extraordinary lengths from bough to bough, interlaces the trees with its thousand arms, and, in addition to its extreme toughness, is provided with closely-growing prickles, two inches in length.

It can be conceived that any thickets, where this plant has gained the upper hand, are quite impervious, and it is requisite to creep round them, or cut a path on one side; but they delay one's progress most materially, and render the walk much more fatiguing.

But for all that, our hunters advanced with some degree of speed, taking all things into consideration, and arrived after about half an hour's march in sight of a little tuft of fern-palms, which they had selected as a mark before starting, and behind which the oxen had certainly entered the lake.

Here they stopped, for they had agreed with the other hunters that they would stop till they heard the signal, on getting near the animals. When they heard the cry of the ulung-ulung—a red falcon with white breast, frequently found here, and which one of the Javanese imitated excellently—they would advance on both sides, and the bantings must then certainly come within shot of one of the detachments.

In the possible, but not very probable, event that the oxen would attempt to swim across the lake, two Javanese had been left behind with guns, and all the other coolies as beaters.

They had not been standing ten minutes at their post, and listening breathlessly for the appointed signal, when there was a splash in the water, and the bushes began to crack and rustle: at the same moment, too, they heard the signal. Just as Frank and Mr. Evans left the bushes, which had hitherto concealed them, and entered a glade in front, four of the bantings rushed from an opposite thicket, and attempted to cross the glade, at about sixty paces distance. The front one was a splendid red bull, with sharp, twisted horns, and he was closely followed by two other young bulls. The cows came in the rear.

"I'll take the front one, and you let fly at one of the others," cried the little naturalist, forgetting all else in the sudden excitement; and when the two rifles cracked almost simultaneously, one of the bull-calves fell dead; while their leader, wounded in the flank, made a furious bound and fell on its knees. But this was only momentary, and might be ascribed more to surprise at the shot than to the ball, for it had scarce touched the grass with its foaming muzzle, ere it sprung up again, and throwing up its head with a fierce, angry growl, it scarcely perceived the foe before it, than it bent down its head and rushed at the alarmed naturalist. The two Javanese now fired also, but one of them missed, while the other only wounded the raging beast in the leg, and rendered it more furious, so that the little Englishman, who was quite confounded by these events, would have become an

easy prey for the bull, had not Frank sprung forward to attract the bull's attention, and then render him harmless with his second barrel. In the former design he was perfectly successful, but when the beast lowered its head and rushed toward him, and he raised the gun to his cheek, the cap missed fire. Frank immediately perceived his imminent danger, and throwing away the useless rifle, tried to escape to the nearest tree. There was, however, not only a strip of marshy ground between him and safety, but the bull would gain the advantage, as he would have to run across right in front of it. There was no time for choosing, and in the hope that the water would keep back his pursuer, Frank sprung over a deep ditch, and jumped into the lake, as far as he possibly could.

He certainly heard a shout at the same instant, but it was immediately drowned by the bubbling of the water above him, and being an excellent swimmer, he kept underneath, until he imagined he had placed a safe distance between himself and the raging animal. He only rose to the surface when he found it impossible to remain any longer down, but had almost uttered a loud cry of terror, on seeing that his terrible, inexorable foe was swimming scarcely twenty paces off, and seeking for its victim with loud snorting and puffing.

Frank could not dive again immediately, for he required a few seconds to draw breath; but, although he only kept his mouth just above water, and did not make the least noise, the furious animal had seen him, and now swam towards him with an angry bel-
low, as if challenging its opponent to the contest.

The lad considered himself lost, when he suddenly thought of the little sharp knife which he carried in a sheath at his waist, and feeling whether it was still secure, he determined on making an attempt to dive again, and so get under his enemy's stomach and give it a stab, from which it would slowly bleed to death. When he saw, therefore, that the bull was swimming directly towards him, he dived once more, and two seconds later, the bull swam exactly over him, and even struck his shoulder with one of its hoofs.

Now whether it was that it felt something in the water, or had marked the spot so accurately at which the pursued had disappeared for the second time beneath the surface—at any rate, it turned round and swam back again to the spot.

Several shots were now fired at the bull by the hunters congregated on the shore. Frank could hear the hollow sound beneath the water; and a fresh danger accrued to the wearied lad, who might be so easily shot by one of the Javanese bunglers, when he rose to the surface, instead of the bull. Still he *must* rise again, for he was afraid of losing consciousness by remaining too long under the water, and then he would infallibly be drowned.

His friends on shore were in scarcely less terror than himself; for they saw plainly, what Frank under the water could not notice, namely, that the furious animal appeared to be cognizant that its victim must be just under or close by it, for it scarcely passed the spot ere it turned back again, and swam round it in small circles.

Mynheer Foelen and Evans now fired at the bull again, and one ball hit it in the head and glanced off,

while the other struck the water in front of it and bounded harmlessly over its back, and the Javanese also gave it a broadside ; but as the latter scattered their lead in every direction, and the Europeans momentarily expected the re-appearance of the unhappy lad, they were soon stopped. Besides, the firing appeared to have no other effect on the bull than to render it, if possible, still more furious, for it seemed determined not to return to land till it had ample revenge.

Frank, when just on the point of rising to the surface again, looked up, and his heart ceased to beat when he saw the dark form of his foe swimming in the clear water just above him. But he had no choice left, and in the hope that the bull would not see him immediately if he rose right behind it, and that he would then gain time to draw breath again and collect his strength, he rose as quickly as he could, and saw daylight once more ; but close before him—so close that he could have laid his hand upon it—swam the bull.

In spite of his exhaustion, his hand sought the knife ; at this moment, the tail of the raging animal lashed the water, and turning suddenly, it perceived its prey. Frank gave himself up for lost ; but the thought crossed his mind like lightning, to catch hold of the tail and hold tight ; the bull would then be utterly unable to attack him, as it had no purchase for its feet in the water, and perhaps he might succeed in conquering it ; at any rate, he would gain time to keep above water and recruit his strength. Of course, he did not require the tenth part of the time in effecting this which I have employed in describing it ; in a second he had seized the bull's tufted tail, and, while

the latter uttered a fearful bellow, and turned round upon him, the very movement took Frank out of reach and danger.

Fear, excitement, and bodily, almost superhuman exertion, had, however, so worn out the lad, that he felt his strength gradually deserting him, and his only hope lay in wounding the bull, and tiring it out by the loss of blood. Plucking his knife from the sheath and drawing as near as he could to the animal's body, he thrust it in with his utmost strength, and repeated the blow thrice in rapid succession, at the same time rendering the orifice as large and gaping as he possibly could.

The bull, thus assailed, bellowed furiously from pain and rage, but was not able to shake off its enemy, who held on like grim death; and itself exhausted by the former wound, the stab it had just received weakened it still more and caused it to sink in the water. It made one last attempt to drive its horns into its youthful assailant, and so tremendous was it, that Frank, who felt his left hand slip, suddenly let the knife fall from his grasp in order to hold on with his other hand. But he had no further use for a weapon; the poor tortured and exhausted brute seemed quite to have forgotten him, and with hurried groans and panting, and only thinking of its own preservation, as it probably felt itself sinking deeper and deeper, it began swimming in a direct line for the nearest land—a flat piece of swampy ground—and dragged Frank after it, who was quite undecided whether to follow the brute ashore or not.

He had, however, no more cause for fear. At the spot where the bull—no longer caring for the hunters

who were rushing up, and with eyes already beginning to grow green and glassy—must land, several of the Javanese, with Mr. Evans, had posted themselves, and as soon as its front legs touched the ground, they fired three balls into its head at scarce ten paces distance. It fell dead in the shallow water, its blood-dripping muzzle just touching the land. The lad, however, who was greeted with shouts of triumph and delight by the other hunters, was so exhausted, that when the excitement of the nerves ceased with the departure of danger, he could not get ashore alone, and was therefore lifted out by the Javanese, who sprang in to his assistance.

The banting-hunt was now at end, for the remainder of the herd had got too great a start, and were besides so startled that it would have been impossible for the hunters to catch them, even if their own exhaustion would have permitted it. The white men, therefore, left the coolies to carry the meat and hides of the killed bulls to the plantation, mounted their horses again, and galloped, as quickly as the difficulties of the path would permit, to the encampment, where every preparation had been made, as if they were going to remain there for a month.

Posts had been driven into the ground, and a thick, firm roof of reeds and leaves laid upon them. The walls were formed of pieces of outstretched sailcloth, and even mattresses had been provided for the Europeans, which had been brought up on the backs of servants, that the white lords of the land might sleep upon them for *one* night.

The natives, who are very skilful in such matters, had formed a table of bamboo, and even in Samarang

or Batavia it could not have been covered with greater profusion, or a finer display of dainties, fruits, and wines. All this was produced in the most terrible wilderness, as if raised by enchantment from the ground; and when the sportsmen had exchanged their wet clothing for dry garments, and came out of the room specially provided for the purpose, into the dining-room, Frank actually rubbed his eyes to be certain that he was not dreaming, so much did it all resemble a story of the "Arabian Nights," or the quaint history of Fortunatus's wishing-cap, which children listen to with such intense delight.

The luxury which is displayed in Eastern countries as regards everything appertaining to comfort, and especially to servants, is really fabulous. Even the shortest expeditions are not undertaken, without requiring a special servant or native—in these countries, convertible terms—to carry each trifle. But if a higher official, or a regent of the natives—who, however, are under the authority of the Europeans—have a journey or tour of inspection to make, he is not satisfied with the production of everything which the villages can offer, but a whole army of "attendants" must gallop before and behind the carriage, to render his progress through the country more imposing.

Thus it is in the Dutch Indies, and in British India it is much worse, where every lieutenant in the army keeps a battalion of servants; and a surgeon, who had to undertake a short journey alone, was heartily pitied by his friends because he would be compelled to go without many, and yet so necessary, comforts, as he had *only* about a hundred natives to accompany him.

It is true, that the hot climate of those countries

forbids the European any species of corporeal exertion; but, taking this as an excuse, he refrains from the slightest movement, and weakens his body in a few years to such a degree, that at last he is not able to perform the slightest duties for himself, even if he really desired it, and so becomes a species of cripple, who is utterly dependent on those around him, and is the most helpless being in the world if they happen to desert him at a pinch.

It is good and advisable to take certain precautions in these hot regions, especially if our bodies are not acclimatised to the heat; but to refrain from the slightest movement, and to watch with almost timid care, lest we should lift our arm to light a cigar, or move a chair to the table—as is the case there,—and rather than do it call up a body of servants, weakens and unnerves the body to such a degree eventually, that the evil and injurious effects cannot be long absent; and many, very many of the diseases of these hot countries, have just as frequently been engendered by this utter and voluntarily-produced exhaustion of our whole nervous system, as by the hot climate itself.

On the next morning—they slept without rocking through the night, in consequence of their unusual exertions—Mr. Evans and Frank went out alone, as Mynheer Foelen asserted that he had business which called him back to the plantation. He left them, however, the greater portion of the natives, with whom they could not at all agree, and who made such a tremendous row in the forest, that there was not a chance of getting a shot. Frank, in fact, felt so exhausted by the immoderate fatigue of the previous

day, which he now began to feel in his limbs; that by midday they knocked-off, and returned to the plantation, greatly to the delight of all their attendants.

CHAPTER XV.

A TIGER AND PANTHER FIGHT.

The native festival. Gamelangs and anklongs. The captured tiger. The Javanese display their bravery. Royal amusements. Death of the tiger. The panther shows fight. An unwelcome guest. Escape of the panther.

IN the plantation they found everybody in the greatest state of excitement and preparation for the morrow's festivities. An open spot had been prepared for the tiger-fight, and about fifty Javanese were busied in erecting a gigantic bamboo-cage at another spot, on whose scaffolding a quantity of laughing and chattering natives were standing, probably narrating the history of former similar festivities, and killing themselves with laughter at the reminiscence of the comical scenes they had witnessed.

During the evening, the strangers heard, as an initiative of the coming festivity, the strange and frequently melodious sounds of the gamelang and anklong, the gongs and violins—sounds so peculiar that they could not possibly imagine from what instruments they were produced, and whose wild unstudied harmony they found themselves quite unable to follow.

The gamelang especially claimed their attention, with its multitude of metal bells, of all sizes, and

beaten with little sticks, much after the fashion of our glass harmonicas, or hand-bells.

The anklong was much more simple, and consisted of pieces of bamboo of different lengths, which hung in a frame, and were shaken against another serrated piece of cane, producing thereby a sound resembling the bells of the Swiss kine.

The violins were all two-stringed, and generally played by Chinese, each of whom, however, had his own peculiar notion of harmony; while the gongs formed the bass, and consisted of round metal plates, which were beaten with padded sticks, and produced a horrible crash, that could be heard at an immense distance. The approach of night in no way interrupted the harmony, for whenever one of the natives laid down the gamelang sticks, probably from fatigue, another had been waiting long and anxiously for the moment to seize them, and without a pause the confused sounds for a long while tortured the ears of the wearied sportsmen.

When Frank rose the next morning at an early hour, these sounds were the first to greet him, and he fancied the fellows had not left off during the whole night—nor, in fact, had they done so. Little flags were fluttering in every direction, and beneath long bamboo huts, open to every breeze, stood broad tables, covered with everything that Indian fancy could collect, in the shape of fruit, and meats, roots, leaves, kernels, berries, pickles and preserves, sugar and confectionery.

The main point of attraction, and the centre of the scene, was the open space on which the cage stood with the prisoned tiger. The cage itself, though

strongly built, was only made of wood, but it was the easily-splitting aren-palm, which wounds the tiger's gums, when it bites furiously at the bars, and compels it to refrain from any such attempts.

The tiger, which had only been brought in that morning from the place where it had been captured, lay stretched out quietly and almost motionless in the cage, with its gleaming eyes half closed, and apparently not heeding the group of men—mortally hated men—that closely surrounded it; but the flashing, sparkling eyes, which restlessly looked round, as if selecting a victim from the mob, contradicted this apparent calmness. For a long while the terrible brute endured the laughter and chatter of the spectators; nor did it even move when a daring boy tormented it with a piece of bamboo thrust between the bars. But at last it hurled itself, with a fierce bound and angry growl, against the wooden grating, and the gasping jowl, the glistening fangs, the fire-flashing eyes, betrayed the fury that consumed the entrails of the captured animal.

At such an outbreak of frenzied rage the Javanes, just before laughing so noisily and carelessly, dispersed like a flock of pigeons on which a hawk has suddenly pounced, and did not return till they had distrustfully examined the cage, to see whether the savage brute could not get out; and then came back laughing loudly and merrily at their own timidity.

The gamelangs, at this moment, commenced a quick and bold melody, and the natives retired bashfully from the cage, for the procession of the Europeans, with the regent at their head, marched up to the spot, preceded by many hundred lance-bearers. While the

white men and the regent mounted a balcony at no great distance from the spot, whence they could be witnesses of the whole scene, the lance-bearers drew themselves up in three rows, as far as their number permitted, round the cage, thus leaving a space of about seventy paces in diameter, whose centre was occupied by the tiger's den.

The band kept up an uninterrupted noise: the circle of lances round the still caged tiger was now closed, and the spectators—an extraordinary medley of Javanese and Chinese men and women from the adjoining village—drew as close as they could to the armed band, in order to witness the liberation of the tiger. All the neighbouring trees were thronged with men, and a perfect crowd of young fellows and men had collected on a decayed waringi tree, which stood close behind the last row of lance-men, and just opposite the balcony, where they clung with hands and feet to the withered branches, and could scarcely await the moment when the spectacle was to commence. They had, certainly, one of the very best places, and others were continually climbing up to get among them, but were pushed back by those already in possession, as, if driven out too far on the withered branches, they feared the chance of their breaking.

The gamelang-players and the gong-beaters were seated in a balcony, also built of bamboo, some ten or eleven feet above the ground, and close behind the lance-bearers: the instruments had been purposely carried up there, in order to allow the musicians to be witnesses of the scene, so that they could regulate their time to the state of the battle. All the other instruments were neglected, for the voluntary musi-

cians had their hands full, and had something else to attend to, than shake the anklongs.

When all this was arranged, a mandoor, or official, approached the platform with all possible ceremony, which only etiquette united with religious bigotry can invent; and after receiving permission from the regent for the sports to commence, the row of lances opened suddenly, and a Javanese dressed in his holiday state, and armed with no other weapons than his khris, walked into the open space, followed by two servants. The latter carried dry wood and pieces of bamboo, as well as burning coals in a hollow cocoa-nut, and walked up with them straight to the cage, behind which they piled up the wood, then fired it by means of the coals, and hurriedly quitted the arena, in which the first comer—apparently a mandoor also—remained alone.

The latter now sprung on the cover of the cage, which was formed of stout planks, and the tiger, which lay crouching beneath him, slowly raised its head, to see what was going on, and perhaps with the faint hope of getting something in reach of its claws, on which it could expend its fury, excited as it had been during the whole morning; its tail began to oscillate gently backwards and forwards, although it did not seem to move a limb.

The Javanese, however, paid no attention to the animal beneath him: well acquainted with its nature as he was, he began to lift and then shut again the trap-door of the cage, and the tiger's eye was soon fixed on the opening, which he saw open and shut in such rapid succession. Being baulked in this fashion, it remained lying in its old posture—when the mandoor at last lifted off the trap-door, and threw it down by

the cage—in the expectation that it would be again closed.

The mandoor, in the meanwhile, descended from the cage again slowly and solemnly, as if to show that he was not in any way alarmed, though throwing side and almost imperceptible glances on the tiger. He then made a low bow in the direction where the regent was seated, or, more properly speaking, he cowered almost to the ground, and began walking majestically, and without looking back—for the monotonous tones of the gamelang informed him that the tiger had not yet quitted its lair—toward the spot where he had in the first instance entered the arena.

The fire gradually extended: the hinder part of the cage was already burning briskly, and the flames were commencing to attack some of the side-bars, and find their way to the interior. The tiger began to feel too warm in its bed, and looking up to the opening of the cage, as if doubting whether to emerge or not, it commenced to lash its tail. All at once, this member went into the flames, and with a hoarse growl, the excited brute turned round to meet the foe that dared to assail it. But instead of an assailant made of flesh and blood, the dense smoke and the suffocating heat of the fire were directly in front of the tiger, and on attempting to escape by a retrograde movement from the hostile element, it found itself soon after—and much surprised, as it seemed—in the open air, and the gamelangs and gongs burst forth in a loud and wild roar of defiance and triumph.

It was a splendid tiger, of a deep yellow colour, with long, regular, black stripes, broad head, and immense paws, that now stood for a moment by the side of its

cage, uttering a roar of concentrated fury and despair, and then rushed, with short bounds, toward the nearest row of spearmen.

But here it most unexpectedly came into collision with the sharp spears of the men, who held down their weapons toward it, and rising on its hind legs, while the dark features of the Javanese were lighted up with triumph, it turned away and ran round the circle past the rows of lances. The gongs were beaten furiously, as the animal flew past them, and it cast a timid glance in the direction of the orchestra, but did not check its speed till it arrived again at the spot where it had made the first attack, and, having apparently made up its mind that there was no other or better way of escape, it leaped right among the spears.

Poor brute ! on all sides they drove the sharp points into its body and wounded it vitally ; but in spite of that, it broke away once more, ran with its gaping wounds a little distance in the arena, and then essayed a second leap, precisely at the same spot. But its strength was too greatly exhausted ; and liberating itself once more from the lances, it tottered back a few paces and expired, while the instruments burst forth madly in a species of triumphal march, and the nearest Javanese, who had not yet taken part in the contest, drove their lances into its still quivering body.

In a second, a quantity of coolies bounded into the arena, to drag away the dead tiger, as well as the cage, which was now in flames ; while the ring opened on the other side, and afforded ingress for eight others. They carried a second, rather smaller, cage, in which

a spotted panther was confined: a joyful shout ran along the rows of spectators, for the panther is far more active and quick than the tiger, and generally displays more courage, which renders the contest, or rather the execution, very much more interesting. For, after all, man is a blood-thirsty, ferocious animal—like the panther.

The same ceremonies as on the former occasion were performed: the mandoor entered the circle with the same solemnity, except that it was not necessary to bring in fresh fire, as the burning fragments of the tiger's cage were more than sufficient to enkindle that of the panther. When this was done, the Javanese mounted on the cage, but the panther was more restless than its predecessor had been, and darted forwards immediately the trap-door was slightly lifted. But when it was closed, it sprang back again to its old position, and observed with sparkling eyes its alternate opening and shutting.

The mandoor on the cage could not see the animal, and the spectators, who from the panther's whole behaviour might perceive that it was extraordinarily lively, and ready to die gallantly, seemed to await the result with breathless attention. The gamelang and gong-beaters alone hammered away at their instruments, and appeared to consider it their duty to fill up the intervening period as pleasantly as possible.

The Javanese now pulled the door off, and flung it away; he then sprang down from the cage, and was beginning with all becoming dignity his sembach or homage, when the panther bounded out of the cage, and the Javanese forgetting in a moment all his

assumed calmness, fled with tremendous bounds, which would have done honour to the tiger, towards the protecting lances, which he safely reached, accompanied by the shouts and yells of the mob, while the liberated animal did not appear to pay the slightest attention to him.

The panther, however, after one hurried glance at the hooting spectators, whose noise for the moment deafened the gamelangs, bounded along close by the outstretched spears—so close, that it almost touched them; and one of the Javanese, who probably found the opportunity too tempting to let it pass, thrust out his spear and wounded the animal, slightly in the flank.

The effect of the wound was magical; the panther fell back, and rushed from one side of the arena to the other, and then crouching down just in front of the musicians' orchestra, it leaped with *one* bound right over the three rows of spearmen, and climbed so rapidly up among the gongs and gamelangs, that the lancers were not able to stab at the animal, ere it disappeared behind the bamboo balustrade.

How the surprised musicians dispersed when the savage, enraged beast bounded among them so suddenly! all care for their necks or other members was forgotten; they left their gamelangs and gongs in the lurch, and threw themselves over the balustrade of the somewhat lofty orchestra with perfect contempt of death. Had a flash of lightning struck the building, they could not have dashed out of its way with greater rapidity.

But though the exhibition of musical instruments the panther found up there must have possessed all

the charm of novelty, it did not interest itself in them, at least for the moment—with a second bound, no way inferior to the first, it was once more on level ground, and flying through the rows of natives, several of whom hurled their khrises ineffectually at it, it sprung over the nearest fence, and had soon disappeared in the adjoining coffee plantation, where it defied pursuit.

The musicians could not be again collected until a considerable time had elapsed.

The panther, probably, would not have afforded the natives such extreme pleasure by the longest and most obstinate fight, as it did by its leap among the musicians. Joyful shouts at first drowned every word, and even a good hour later, groups of the tall, brown, and picturesquely-attired natives were standing laughing and talking, and described with the most expressive gesticulations the various comical details of this last "sport."

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FIGHT BETWEEN THE BOAR AND THE GOAT,
AND HOW THE MONKEYS BEHAVED THE WHILE.

The goat and his tub. An impertinent intruder. The monkey's tricks. The boar shows fight. The blue monkey interferes. He meets the usual fate of intruders. The boar gives in. Termination of the festivities. Indefatigable musicians.

BUT the natives soon had other scenes to afford them matter for conversation, for the attention of the spectators was now attracted to another place, whither the Europeans proceeded with the regent.

This was the already-mentioned gigantic bamboo cage, which was formed below of strong posts, some distance apart, and higher up covered with a thin network of rattan and bamboo, wide enough to allow the interior to be plainly seen, and still sufficiently close to keep in the larger varieties of monkeys.

In the centre of this cage was a post, and near it a rather large empty cask on one end, while its sole inmates had been till now a very powerful goat, and four of the common long-tailed brown apes. The goat was pacing majestically up and down the cage, eating a few luxuries that were thrown in by the spectators, and did not deign a glance at the apes. It had a stately beard, and a pair of splendidly-twisted horns, and was apparently a strong and remarkably muscular animal.

The blue monkey—so called from the bluish-grey colour of its hair, or more frequently the howling monkey, as it utters the strangest and most melan-

choly shriek that can be imagined—was sitting with a black long-tailed monkey (the blue ape has no tail), on the top of the cask, rarely allowing the other to take his seat upon it; and the blue gentleman frequently turned round and cast a most savage glance on the other, when it amused itself by lashing its long tail, and happened to strike the blue monkey. It made a grab at it once or twice, but could not catch hold of it, and probably did not care to commence a serious quarrel, for the black apes are savage brutes, with teeth as sharp as a dog's—and, besides, cannot understand a joke.

The brown, who are also long-tailed, apes—just in the same manner that *we* prefer going to those very places which we ought not to visit—had sprung several times already on the cask, and when the blue ape turned round on them, attempted to climb up the post in the centre of the cage; but it was never more than an *attempt*, for the post had been well rubbed with soap, and one of those seated below always seized the experimentalizer by the tail, and drew him back. On one occasion they terribly annoyed the goat by actually falling on its back.

This pleasant still-life was soon, however, to be disturbed in a most unexpected and rough fashion. In the first place, the men assembled round the cage with their loud laughing and chattering, and the sounds of the gamelangs and gongs close by—for the musicians had gradually collected again—did not at all please the animals. They became restless, and the goat, probably believing that one of the apes was to blame for it all, lowered its head and butted at the cask. By this attack it terribly startled the blue ape, and

pinched the tail of the black monkey against the post, so sharply, that he drew it up with a loud cry of alarm, examined it carefully, and twisted it in every direction. He then had a comfortable scratch, while gnashing his teeth at the goat as it walked majestically up and down, and cutting all manner of angry faces.

Suddenly, the attention of the whole company was attracted towards the door of their temporary abode, for a band of chattering, laughing coolies arrived there with a large and apparently very heavy bamboo cage, which they put down close to it. The door was then opened, and when the goat curiously approached it—and even the blue ape had come down from its elevation, to see what was going on—a trap-door was suddenly removed, and at the same instant a fierce, black, bristly boar rushed in, as if shot from a bow, among the terrified company, who naturally dispersed as suddenly as the gong and gamelang beaters just before, when the panther visited them.

The ape mounted the cask at a bound, and proceeded to climb the pole, but this was prevented by the soap, and the goat fled at the first alarm to the other side of the cask, and fancied itself in security there. The boar, however, not taking the slightest notice of the other animals, scarcely found itself liberated from its close confinement, than it also tried to find its way into the open country, and ran with a savage grunt all round the bamboo wall, seeking for the outlet, which it could not find.

The goat, in the meanwhile, had pressed itself close to the cask, and it was only when the grunting boar passed several times close by it, that its old anger and pride gained the ascendancy over its alarm: it bowed

its head, drew back a little, and just as the boar was passing, gave it such a tremendous blow in the temple, that the poor brute was hurled back against the side of the cage. This was, however, a little too much, and turning angrily on its treacherous assailant, the boar gave him a slight wound on the shoulder, and pressed the goat so close, that the latter was compelled to escape on to the top of the cask, which it effected with one leap—in fact the cask had been placed here for that very purpose.

By this proceeding, the goat was of course terribly in the way of the monkeys, which tried again, though in vain, to retreat *viâ* the post, while the two brown apes ran up the side walls, and, then supporting themselves by their legs and one arm, let the other and their tail hang down, and gnashed their teeth at the boar, who was certainly the cause of the whole commotion, and who now began playing the part of master of the house.

The goat, in the meanwhile, examined the terrain, without deigning to look at the monkeys, who were scratching and biting each other, and at last, clearly perceiving that up here it had its rear protected, it sprang down from the cask, and lowering its head and drawing back a couple of paces, it butted the boar once again so furiously, that he fell on his knees, but soon started up, and turned angrily again on his courageous assailant. The boar attacked the goat so vigorously and with such unexpected success, that the latter sought hurriedly to regain its place of shelter, but upset the cask by its violent leap, and reached the ground on the other side, while the boar savagely ran at the rolling cask.

But now the comic side of the contest really commenced—the two large monkeys, also deprived of their refuge by the overthrow of the cask, tried to climb, though fruitlessly, up the slippery post. The black one, who appeared the most agile, had scarcely raised himself more than four feet from the ground, when the blue one seized him by the tail, and pulled him down again, and then attempted to secure his own safety by flying to the bamboo posts. The goat, however, then butted at the black monkey, and while the latter sprang actively aside upon the boar, and from the latter to the wall, the goat generally ran its head with such fury against the post, that the whole building shook. The goat could not devote much time to an examination of the wood-work, for the boar attacked it again; but cleverly escaping from the rush by leaping on one side, it gave the black fellow such a violent and well-judged blow in the rear, that the animal fell on its knees with a furious grunt at the unexpected blow, and only recovered in time to receive a second butt on the side of the head.

With a loud yell of pain the boar again rushed at the goat, who, with a single bound, mounted the overturned cask. But here it had no holdfast, the cask began rolling, and the goat had its *feet* full in retaining its equilibrium. The boar appeared, too, to have received such blows that he was really forced to gasp for breath ere he could renew the extraordinary contest. He, therefore, contented himself with grunting at the apes, who when the boar remained quiet for awhile, began employing the animal's back as a step, by means of which they sprang conveniently up and down. At last, however, the goat lost its balance, the cask rolled

from beneath its feet, and the boar, regarding this in the light of a fresh insult, rushed to the attack once again.

This time, however, the boar was most roughly greeted; the goat, in the worst possible temper, through the rolling of the cask,—perhaps, too, through the wounds it had previously received,—did not await the attack, but itself rushed on the boar.

The second blow, by which it followed up the first one, would, probably, have been still more dangerous had not the blue ape interposed, though in a most involuntary manner. The latter, namely, had in the meanwhile and very unnecessarily commenced a private quarrel with the black ape, which Blackey, though for a long while most patient and enduring, at last thought incompatible with his feelings of honour and courage. He, therefore, suddenly set upon the blue ape so furiously with nails and teeth—holding on by his tail twisted round one of the posts in the meanwhile—that the blue ape was forced to let loose to defend himself against the furious attack, and now, while his assailant remained hanging by his stern-cable, as the sailors would say, and swung backwards and forwards, he fell between the two animals contending below, just as the goat was preparing for a fresh butting match. The poor wretch could not have arrived at a more unseasonable moment, for his breast-bone was broken in by the force of the blow, and he fell dead by the side of the boar; while the goat, which, on hearing the loud yell, could only imagine that a new opponent had arrived, sprang back again upon its rolling cask.

The boar, on the other hand, of course unaware of

the famous, though involuntary, service the dead beast had done him, gave the corpse a couple of digs in his powerless fury, and then turned towards the cask. But here the goat, which had acquired fresh courage and confidence, by the successful result of the contest, met him half way, and belaboured him in such a manner that the boar at last was unable to rise from the ground, through an injury to his spine. The goat, which animal in these contests generally gains the victory, now gave him three or four tremendous blows, and then bounded—but this time in triumph—again on the cask, where it seemed to rock and balance itself, as if in fun, and thus gave great umbrage to the black monkey, who had found this a famous place from which to watch the contest.

With the victory of the goat—for the boar was so exhausted that it could not recommence the contest—the interest the spectators took in the battle ceased, and the Europeans quitted the scene, to which the natives now thronged curiously, to see whether the boar would recover again, or the goat renew the fight, for which there was no want of incitement.

The festivities were thenceforth confined principally to eating and drinking, and the dances of the natives, which lasted the whole night; at least the incessant sounds of the gamelangs and gongs were the first things that greeted Frank Wildman's ear when he awoke the next morning at daybreak.

CHAPTER XVII.

MALAY SUPERSTITIONS ABOUT THE ALLIGATOR, AND
HOW THE APES CATCH CRABS.

Visit to a Malay village. Frank has employment offered him. An ill behaved alligator. The great magician. The incantation. Punishment of the criminal. The deserted campong. The monkeys' evening diversions. Crab-catching. Pain and pleasure.

DURING the next month nothing extraordinary occurred, for Mr. Evans and Frank wandered about the woods, devoting the whole of their time to scientific inquiries, and collecting plants and minerals, so that they came home frequently heavily laden, and the Javanese shook their heads, wondering how these mad Europeans could go about in wind and storm, dew and rain, in order to load themselves with withered plants, and fragments of stones, as if they were gold and jewels. Mr. Evans's health, however, at last gave way, and fearing a fever, which he might possibly escape by a course of medicine, he returned with Frank to Samarang.

The young lad, who disliked the idle life in the hotel, while he felt unwilling to spend his days in doing nothing, again longed for active scenes, and most welcome to him was the invitation of an American, whose acquaintance he formed in Samarang, to visit him at Djaraka, a little village close to Samarang, and there employ his time in hard work.

Djaraka lay on the sea, and the house of the American, a Mr. Wilson, surrounded by cocoa-palms and bananas, overlooked the wide expanse of waters, which was enlivened by countless boats and sails. It was an exquisite spot even for Java, that land of fine scenery; and the little village itself, with its strangely mingled styles of architecture, the poor bamboo huts of the natives, close to the spacious and elegant dwellings of the Europeans, only served to bring out in ~~more~~ striking relief the splendid vegetation, and rich colouring of the fruit-orchards which begirt it.

Frank made himself quite at home there, collected birds' eggs and insects, chafers and butterflies, and employed a great portion of his leisure time in examining the state and cultivation of the country, in which he was so successful, that in about six months Mr. Wilson proposed to him to undertake the management of a plantation belonging to a brother-in-law of his, a Dutch planter, in the island of Bangka, near Sumatra. Frank gladly accepted, and the time for his departure was arranged for the next month, as a prahu which was going to carry machinery and other necessaries to the little colony would then be ready for sea.

About this time—and he employed his days now almost exclusively in wandering about the neighbourhood—they heard that some five paals westward, on the southern coast, a man had been devoured by an alligator, and a Malay enchanter was going to try the alligator on the next day, and probably kill it.

This was an opportunity to learn something about the manners and superstitions of this strange people, which Frank would not let pass unnoticed; but as

Mr. Wilson had no time to accompany him, he was forced to set out alone, and trotted on the same morning, accompanied by a Malay servant, and provided with a letter of introduction to the mandoor of the village, towards the place indicated, which he reached after a two hours' ride.

The Malay, who accompanied him, spoke English well enough to carry on conversation with him, and he could not have required a better interpreter; besides, too, he was an old acquaintance of yours, dear reader, and no one less than Mr. Evans's little fat Malay, who had not at all agreed with his old master since the day when he fell overboard with the tamarinds. He had consequently left him about a month previously, and looked out for Frank, whom he had always liked. The fellow was most modest in his demands, and seemed to be dearly attached to the young man. We can, in truth, call Frank so, for the last year had made a great alteration in him, both bodily and mentally, and he looked even older and more manly than he really was.

On their little horses they galloped merrily up to the mandoor's house; Frank delivered his letter, was most cordially received, and forced—in spite of his assertions that he had eaten a hearty meal only two hours before—to seat himself at a table, upon which several girls laid a number of dishes of every possible variety. The mandoor incessantly pressed him, and the little man was so friendly at the same time, so polite, and made such a terribly sorrowful face when Frank declined one of the countless dishes, or, better speaking, plates, that the latter was forced willy-nilly to overload his stomach, and only hoped for a ride

after dinner, in order to bring it again into some degree of order.

As soon as the mandoor saw that Frank was regularly at work, he cowered down on the ground, and ate only those articles which Frank had left. The young man really felt uncomfortable at being regarded so reverentially here, and almost involuntarily he remembered that he himself had been treated as a servant on board the pirate, not so very long ago. In India, however, colour ennobles, and we Europeans must not consider it so very strange, for if we were to revert to the source of that which, among *us*, brings one portion of the nation on their knees before the other—equally extraordinary, and perhaps more extraordinary, things would be brought to light.

After dinner, or indeed during the meal, he was served with coffee, but prepared in a very different way from what he had been accustomed to. One of the girls, namely, put a tablespoonful of pounded coffee into his cup, and then poured boiling water upon it: it was certainly rather unpleasant to have his mouth filled with grounds, but he would not for the world have said anything, for his hospitable host would have been capable of upsetting the whole campong (village), in order to discover another way of satisfying his taste.

But Frank was, above all, interested in the alligator enchanter; and he awaited impatiently the moment for starting; but the mandoor had already attended to this, and sent off a messenger to inquire into the progress of affairs. The latter soon returned, and Frank now learned that the magician would regard it as an honour, if the white man would be

present at the incantation, and they would defer the ceremony in order that he might have time to come.

If this was the case, Frank would not by any means cause delay : fresh horses were soon brought, and with the fat little Malay on a gladach or servant's horse behind them, and a whole swarm of others whom the mandoor considered he required as an escort, they galloped through a grove of magnificent cocoa-palms, towards a little poor fishing village, which they reached after half an hour's sharp ride.

They found the whole population on their legs, although the sun was still high ; but the mandoor galloped straight up to one of the largest bamboo houses, which was adorned with a long verandah, sprang from his horse, and, after lifting Frank from the saddle, carried him into the interior of the cabin, where he was most solemnly received by an old man. Here they again found a table covered from top to bottom with eatables and liquors, where, as it seemed, the whole previous festivity was to be renewed. The young man, however, found this beyond a joke, and he declared laughingly, that he was not able to swallow a single mouthful, and the natives were compelled to devour the dainties alone, in spite of all their entreaties. His host at the former feed, however, seated himself at work again, and did not allow it to be perceived that he had had anything to eat before during the day.

The meal was more speedily completed than might at starting have been anticipated from the number of small dishes ; the majority of the natives had already gone down to the sea-shore ; and Frank now stole

gently out of the hut with the Malay, in order not to miss the ceremony of the alligator enchanting through the eternal eating and drinking. The fellow's name was Tji-kandi, from that of the village which he was born in.

Tji-kandi on the road explained to him the real significance of the ceremony, which had its origin in the superstition, or, more correctly speaking, the religious and good-tempered feeling of the natives: for the latter consider the alligator sacred. Allah,—for nearly all the Javanese are Mahommedans,—holds it under his especial protection; and no Javanese would venture to kill an alligator, except under the present exceptional circumstances.

Allah, namely, has severely interdicted the alligators, who are his children, from devouring, or even killing his other children—men, and the alligators are much too reasonable beings to overstep such a command; they even keep order among themselves, and many persons gravely assert that swimmers have been defended by alligators against any individual of their band who tried to infringe their law. But there are wicked, worthless beings in every sect, among all beings; then why not among the alligators as well? and there are even instances, though certainly rare ones, where such a villanous and godless brute, forgetting Allah's ordinances, attacks, kills, and devours a human being. Allah, however, is magnanimous; the punishment does not follow immediately; the sinner is warned and allowed time to repent. Forbidden fruits, however, are the sweetest, and human flesh is very nice to certain tastes: when an alligator has once committed such a fault, there is generally

but a poor prospect of its amendment; it is ten to one that it seizes the next man that comes across its path, either by the arm or leg, or devours him at a meal; and Allah, now seriously displeased with such an impenitent sinner, orders man to inflict condign punishment upon it: these commands men then obey, and kill the wicked alligator.

Tji-kandi had hardly finished his little story, when they heard horses galloping behind them, and the mandoor with his whole suite came up to them. They had missed the white man entrusted to their charge, and in great terror mounted their horses to catch him, before any accident could happen to him. They certainly made him gentle reproaches for causing them such an alarm, but Frank galloped laughingly towards the beach, where the Malays were standing at a reverend distance from the water, and apparently listening to the words of an old native, who was narrating something to them with marvellous gesticulations and in a loud voice.

It was the enchanter; the young white man was introduced to him, and he then turned towards the sea, whither all the others followed him, evidently in a state of nervous excitement.

The spot they were bound for lay on the verge of a small swamp, overgrown with ozier-like bushes, and intersected by numerous lagunes. This was the favourite abiding-place of the alligators, for they could reach the shore comfortably under the shelter of the ozier bushes when they wish to travel *incognito*, and roast themselves on the adjoining slip of sand to any degree of hardness they pleased in the burning sun. Here the alligator had treacherously seized the man

who kept his canoe on the edge of the swamp, and here, too, it was to suffer its punishment.

Frank, however, was not a little astonished at not seeing a single trace of any such animal—he had fancied the man-eater had been captured and would be kept in confinement, till the hour for its execution arrived; but now Tji-kandi told him that the intended victim was still somewhere in the sea, for in that the charm consisted—killing an alligator, which was confined in a cage, was no such difficult task, he could do that himself.

The magician lost no time in long preparations, for, advancing along the sand bank, in such wise that he always kept ten or twelve paces of dry ground between himself and the water (and he had chosen ebb tide for this ceremony); he uttered a long-drawn peculiarly yelling or shrill cry, and then began singing a low monotonous song, to which he beat the time with his hands. From time to time he repeated the cry, which quivered with a most peculiar effect across the water, and then he bowed his head to east and west and commenced his incantation anew.

There was a movement in the water—a couple of dusky bodies emerged; they lay like pieces of charred wood on the surface, and drifted slowly up without any visible movement. Others came up from the other side, opposite the willow swamp; four or five raised themselves slowly from the depths, and every time that the peculiar cry was heard, it almost seemed as if these dark bodies were held by wires, for they moved forwards simultaneously as long as the cry lasted, and when it ceased they fell back more and more into their old position. It was evident that the

man exercised an extraordinary, and at the first blush inexplicable, influence over the animals, for they un-mistakeably obeyed his call, then gradually approached the beach, and lay there drawn up in rank and file, and as if waiting further orders, with their heads projecting above the water, while here and there some very large brute raised half its harnessed back above the surface of the water.

But the old enchanter was not disposed to initiate his audience immediately into the *arcana* of his proceedings, for he now began a slow and solemn dance before the brutes, commencing with the last in sight, and while the spectators drew nearer slowly and timidly, to understand the words which the enchanter muttered rather than sang, he appeared to pay no further attention to them, but devoted himself exclusively to the alligators.

Frank did not understand a syllable of the whole incantation: Tji-kandi, however, who drew as near the magician as he could, which infringement of regulations was conceded as the European was standing by his side, explained to him that the old man was praising all the virtues and qualities of each individual animal, and telling them that Allah was satisfied with them, and would allow his sun to shine upon their backs, and that they should remain such respectable, temperate alligators, and not let themselves be seduced by evil examples, though he would not mention any name.

"You are the best!" he sang as he walked up to a tremendously large fellow, who lay there with half-closed eyes, and looked up sleepily at him, "you are the best of all, you keep them in order, and I know

that you assisted my son against the vagabond, whom we killed last year."

"You are still young!" he then continued, addressing another, "but I fear no good will come of you; I have heard bad things about you—very bad. Repent, repent."

"And you are good too," he sang to the others, "and shall have presents, which your father will bring you—huh, eh, hu!" And the lengthened yell again sounded over the waters, so that the beasts held up their heads and looked around; it seemed as if it came from every quarter at once.

But now the dance assumed a different character—it became more animated and expressive, and was executed almost exclusively round a rather large alligator with a remarkably broad head, which lay with nearly half its body projecting from the water, and regarding the old man with its glistening, cunning little eyes: this was the criminal, and the magician now expressed his opinion about the brute's conduct in unsparing terms.

Good Allah! how he assailed the alligator—for this was not the first lapse from virtue: twice already, once for a well-founded suspicion, the second time caught in the very act, the animal had been reproved, and warned of the inevitable consequences of such conduct; but now the measure of its iniquities was full, and punishment must ensue.

The alligator, as if it understood the conversation, and was certainly tortured by an evil conscience, first raised its gigantic upper mandible, and shut it again, as if it was troubled by *ennui*; but gradually it

commenced to retire slowly into the water—it did not feel quite comfortable at this summing up. The old man scarcely perceived the movement, for he had not taken his eye off the animal, ere he again uttered his huh-i-uh, far more piercingly than on any previous occasion, and the crocodile lay quiet and immovable.

The old man now made a sign, and several Malays with baskets came up, and brought food for the crocodiles—for one a piece of meat, for another a fish, for a third a lump of rice, and it was, in fact, a regular feast. For the criminal, however, a special dainty had been prepared, which consisted of a large piece of meat, with a powerful shark-hook concealed in it. This the old magician himself took—and this portion of the incantation was natural enough—to the broad-headed crocodile, and first casting a large lump to his neighbour, to excite the animal's appetite, he then offered him the hook. Meat and hook disappeared together, and the up-raised arm of the enchanter was the signal for the Malays to give a slight pull at the rope to which the hook was attached. The old man stood by the beast's side, and when the captured brute began to perceive that it had swallowed something out of the common, and grew restless, he recommenced his lecture, told the other crocodiles to notice how they could witness with their own eyes the consequences of disobeying Allah's commands, and then let go of the rope with a peculiar cry, very different, however, from the preceding.

In a second, some twenty Malays were hanging on the rope, and the immense captured brute, so suddenly torn from its native element, lashed the water with its tail, and made a furious noise. But it was of no avail, the

hook was secure; and the old man, quite forgetting his former solemn movements, jumped to the head of the alligator, and drove his khris into its throat; then retiring, he left the animal to be despatched by the others, who soon with their daggers separated the head from the body, which quivered for a while on the sand.

- The other alligators, on seeing the turn matters had taken, here retired slowly into the water, without anybody molesting them in the slightest degree.

Tji-kandi certainly believed in the supernatural power of the enchanter—he had been brought up in the belief, and that is an excuse for much; but Frank had every reason for conjecturing that the old fellow, who had been chosen priest and protector of the alligators, watched them daily from his cabin, and had rendered them half-tame by continually feeding them with his own hand. The approach of the animals is easily explicable, therefore, in this way; but still the intimate relations subsisting between the man and the animals were extraordinary, and must originate from a careful knowledge and study of their several characters, which could naturally only be obtained by patience and perseverance.

The mandoor, who now came up, was evidently delighted that the execution had gone off so satisfactorily—the white man would thus feel a certain respect for his countrymen, and he told Frank a quantity of anecdotes about other “wicked” alligators, all of whom Allah had delivered into their hand, and what a remarkably talented man their magician was; and that, in addition, he was skilled in breeding storms, and other trifles of the same nature.

The evening had, in the meanwhile, advanced considerably, and on walking up the beach they approached a little thicket of mango and ramputan-trees, above which a few cocoa and aren-palms raised their heads. It was an old deserted campong, and immediately in its rear the wildly overgrown jungle began again.

After walking close up to the old campong, they were on the point of turning back—for the mandoor assured them supper would be ready, and the meats and coffee, and other delicacies grow cold—when a young fellow emerged from the thicket, and said a few words to the mandoor. The latter turned, with a laugh, to Frank, and asked him if he had ever seen the apes catch crabs. Frank replied in the negative, and the mandoor, taking his hand, led him gently and cautiously through the deserted village, to a spot which the young fellow had pointed out, and where the old, formerly planted hedges of the *rosa sinensis* (or rambang sapatoe, shoe-flower, as the natives term it, in consequence of their using it to make the boots of the Europeans black and varnished) rendered it an easy task for them to approach unobserved.

At length they reached the boundary of the former settlement—a dry sandy soil and strip of beach, where all vegetation ceased, and only a single tall pandanus-tree, whose roots were thickly interlaced with creeping plants formed, as it were, the advanced post of the vegetable kingdom. Behind this they crawled along, and, cautiously raising their heads, they saw several apes, at a distance of two or three hundred paces, who were partly looking for something as they walked up and down the beach, while others stood motionless. It was the long-tailed brown variety, and

Frank was beginning to regret that he had not his telescope with him, to watch the movements of these strange beings more closely, when one of them, a tremendously large fellow, began to draw nearer to them. Carefully examining the ground, over which he went on all fours, he stood at intervals to scratch himself, or to snap at some insect that buzzed round him. He came up so close that Frank fancied that he must scent them and give the alarm to the other monkeys, when, suddenly passing over a little elevation covered with withered reedy grass, he discovered a party of crabs, parading up and down on the hot sand. With a bound he was amongst them, but not quickly enough to catch a single one; for the crabs, though apparently so clumsy, darted like lightning into a quantity of small holes or cavities, which made the ground here resemble a sieve, and the ape could not thrust in his paw after them, for the orifices were too narrow.

The mandoor nudged Frank gently, to draw his attention, and they saw the ape, after crawling once or twice up and down the small strip of land, and peering into the various holes, with his nose close to the ground, suddenly seat himself very gravely by one of them, which he fancied most suitable. He then brought round his long tail to the front, thrust the end of it into the cavity, until he met with an obstacle, and suddenly made a face, which so amused Frank that he would have laughed loudly, had not the mandoor raised his finger warningly—and directly after the ape drew out his extraordinary line with a jerk. At the end of it, however, hung the desired booty, a fat crab, by one of its claws, and swinging it round on the ground with such violence as to make

it lose its hold, he took it in his left paw, picked up a stone in the other, and after cracking the shell, devoured the savoury contents with evident signs of satisfaction.

Four or five he thus caught in succession, on each occasion when the crab nipped him making a face of heroic resignation and pain; but each time he was successful, and he must have found in the dainty dish and the revenge for the nip, abundant satisfaction for the pain he endured—or else he would not have set to work again so soon.

Thus then the ape, quite engaged with the sport, and without taking his eye off the ground, had approached to within about twenty paces of the party concealed behind the pandanus tree. Here again the ground was full of holes, and looking out the one he conjectured to be the best, he threw in his line once more, and probably felt that there was something alive within, for he awaited the result with signs of most eager attention. The affair, however, lasted longer than he had anticipated, but being already tolerably filled by his past successful hauls, he pulled up his knees, laid his long arms upon them, bowed his head, and half closing his eyes, he assumed such a resigned and yet exquisitely comical face, as only an ape is capable of putting on under these circumstances. But his quiet was destined to be disturbed in a manner as unexpected as it was cruel: he must have discovered some very interesting object in the clouds, for he was staring up there fixedly, when he suddenly uttered a loud yell, left hold of his knees, felt with both hands for his tail, and made a bound in the air, as if the ground under him was beginning to grow

red hot. At the end of his tail, however, hung a gigantic crab, torn with such desperate energy from its hiding-place, and Frank could not restrain himself any longer, but burst into a loud laugh. The mandoor at first retained his gravity ; but when the ape, alarmed by the strange sound, looked up in spite of his pain and saw men, and then bounded off at full speed, with his tormentor still dangling at the end of his tail, the old man could no longer refrain either, and they both laughed till the tears ran down their cheeks.

The ape, in the meanwhile, flew across the narrow strip of sand, followed by all the others, towards the jungle, and in a moment after, not a single one was visible.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE SHIPWRECK.

Frank prepares to depart. The crew of the prahu. The hurricane. Magnificent appearance of the ocean. Cowardice of the captain. The prahu sinks. Frank battling with the waves. The impromptu raft. A sail. Out of the frying-pan into the fire.

THE time approached when Frank was to commence his new duties, and they had only to await the setting in of the south-east monsoon, when the prahu would be sent across to Bangka, with a quantity of articles intended for the plantation. Frank was to accompany them ; and full of hopes at his new prospects, which

even the description of the unhealthy climate prevailing there, given him by Tji-kandi, did not dissipate, he made his slight preparations, and was all in readiness to start, when the monsoon sent its harbinger over the sea in the shape of a stiff south-easter.

They were compelled, however, to await the passing of this storm—at such a season a large vessel has great difficulty in keeping afloat, much less one of these coasting vessels. But when the weather cleared again, and the fresh, sharp breeze promised a quick and successful voyage, the last provisions, with water and other necessaries, were taken on board—not omitting a kantaka, or swivel; for piratical prahus frequently made these seas, though repeatedly crossed by vessels of war, the scene of their savage and murderous attacks; and after a cordial leave-taking from Wilson and Mr. Evans, whom he visited in Samarang, but found still seriously ill, they weighed anchor and put out to sea in excellent spirits.

The crew of the prahu consisted of the master, who was an Arab; seven Malays, as sailors; a Chinese, as cook; and Frank and Tji-kandi, who could not be induced to quit him, as passengers. Tji-kandi, however, was taken on board, with the understanding that he would lend a hand when required.

The distance from Samarang to Bangka is not great, in fact it is only a few degrees, so that any good vessel could perform the voyage, with the favouring monsoon, in a very short time. The first day gave them the best hopes; the sky was clear, and the wind blew so stiffly from the south-east, that they could scarcely carry all their matting sails; and the little vessel bounded merrily over the waves. The next day,

however, brought many changes : as the horizon cleared in the east, the breeze grew stiffer—the clouds flew athwart the sky, as if afraid of arriving too late to witness the uprising of dawn, and the sea roared with a hollow and gloomy sound. Their sails were reduced—for they cannot reef them on board such vessels—and they ran before the wind at a speed of ten knots an hour.

But the monsoon is a dangerous guest, when he puffs out his cheeks just at the change—the old north-west monsoon has not quite forgotten his former tricks, and frequently howls his parting salutation across the sea, when the new lord, the south-east monsoon, is busily engaged in sweeping the sea clear of foam and waves : and if the two come in collision, ships generally bear the brunt of it.

Hah ! how it howled over the waves, and roared and whistled through the rigging of the prahu : the sails had been reduced as much as possible, and still it threatened to tear the mast from its wedges, through the violent gusts it assailed it with. The Malays are excellent seamen in quiet weather, but when they are compelled to peril their life against the elements, they soon lose their heads, or do not set to work with anything like the requisite energy.

The sea gradually rose, and the waves grew so high and pursued them with such fury, that they were compelled to set more sail to escape them, unless they would run the risk of having their deck washed by a tremendous sea, and losing everything upon it.

In spite of the storm, they therefore put on more sail ; but the wind blew with such violence, that they seemed ready to burst, and the masts groaned and

creaked, and the vessel laboured as if she were going to pieces.

With sunset the storm appeared to increase instead of abating; the hurricane howled along its path, and one of those terrible typhoons, the terror of the sailor, was rattling at the gates of the ocean, as if wishing to force its way into its nethermost depths. The sea, at the same time, glowed with a peculiar phosphorescent light, though with a degree of splendour which the sailor rarely witnesses, even in these latitudes; the agitated sea not only emitted a bright light, through which the vessel cleft its fiery, glistening, and sparkling way, and left a bright strip of silver behind it in the darkness, but the entire ocean appeared a liquid fire down to its lowest depths, and the waves, as they rose and roared behind them, cast a brilliant light into the remotest corner of the prahu.

But though the effulgence of the sea is magnificent in calm weather, and the flashing and sparkling of the waves, which appeared to be traversed by thousands of fire-balls, is a very exquisite sight; still, in a storm, it is terrible to behold, and if it appears with such extraordinary effect as it did in this instance, it is well adapted to fill the hearts of the generally timid natives with horror and alarm.

Tji-kandi, though generally one of the most sensible, was sitting on the deck near the rudder, in silent despair; and when Frank, who was not yet fully cognizant of all the dangers to which they were exposed, and was never weary of regarding the wild, terrific splendour that surrounded them, tried to cheer him up, he shook his head, and said that it was all over with them: the vessel would never reach port,

for the gates of the lower world were open, and it was possible to see into the fiery abyss through the clear water.

As long as the sail was not carried away, there was a hope of escaping the storm, for the prahu was an excellent sailer; the crests of the pursuing waves alone usually reached the deck, and seemed to cover them with a fiery shower. Their situation, however, grew each moment more dangerous; the wind at the same time began to shift; and the Arab captain lay in the cabin with his forehead on the ground, and prayed to Allah; Tji-kandi was past praying. The only calm person of the crew was the Chinese, the pagan: the latter, when he saw that all had lost their heads, and the man at the tiller looked more behind him at the thundering waves than before him at his vessel, went up and took the rudder, which was gladly given to him; he then steered the prahu with a steady, sure hand. The man of China turned his pigtail towards the waves, and suffered them to howl behind him as much as they liked: as long as mast and sail held, and the storm did not grow worse, they had a chance of escaping.

But the wind was gradually shifting to the east, and they did not dare to run away from their present course; for in doing so, they would have the sea on their weather-side, and this would be a dangerous experiment. Still, the yards must be swung round, and yet the captain, to whom the charge of the vessel was intrusted, was not for a moment visible on deck.

Tchuning, the Chinese, would not longer take the responsibility on himself, and begged Frank, who was standing by his side, to go below and fetch the Arab.

Frank, who was not at all satisfied with his behaviour, quickly left the deck, but had scarce disappeared in the hatchway, when there was a fearful crash on deck, and at the next moment, a tremendous sea broke over them and actually washed him down the steps. He had scarce time to regain his legs, when a second sea broke with almost greater force against the side of the poor vessel; and while Frank, more through an instinct of the danger in which he now was, rather than perfectly conscious of it, rushed back again to the open air, he felt himself suddenly seized from behind, and the Arab sprang over him, kicking him down the steps in order to save his own cowardly carcass.

But the very thing which appeared at first to be the destruction of the young man—the cabin was already quite filled, and the vessel rapidly sinking—had been his salvation; for the Arab had scarcely reached the deck, when another wave broke over him, hurled him against the still standing mast, where he lay senseless, and then washed him overboard, while Frank, who now followed him, grasped at the light bamboo railing which had been loosened by the waves, and found himself, a second afterwards, drifting on the open sea; the prahu had disappeared, but ten men struggling with the waves, were floating on planks and bamboos, at the mercy of the elements.

It is a remarkable fact, but not the less a fact, that it really oftentimes appears as if the storm had chosen a special object, as if it desired to seize upon and annihilate some victim, and then, satisfied with its day's work, forgets its fury and turbulence. The heaviest storm is frequently succeeded by a bright and quiet sky; when the lightning has struck some peaceful roof,

and while the building is blazing and smoking, and men stand confounded and trembling at the fearful blow, the clouds part, the sun breaks through, and shines down from a calm azure sky upon the scene of desolation beneath.

Thus it was in this instance: as if the sea had only demanded one small victim, the quivering prahu of the islanders, ere it returned quiet and contented within its ancient bounds, or that the storm was terrified at the misfortune it had brought on the merrily bounding vessel; at any rate, it forgot its fury with equal rapidity. The waves, it is true, rose for awhile as high as they had previously dope, for their fury, when once aroused, could not be so easily appeased; but gradually they became smaller and weaker, their surface was smoothed, and the crew of the poor vessel drifted on the bamboo bulwarks, which a compassionate wave had carried within their reach to save them from utter destruction.

But was this any salvation? Would it not have been a thousandfold better for the wave which submerged their vessel to have carried them down at the same time, instead of suffering them to perish here slowly and miserably from thirst, hunger, and exhaustion? Was not this dying a thousand deaths, when one sudden stroke would have severed the thread which they would now be compelled to watch as each fibre parted? No; the poor human heart hangs to existence, and greets that as safety and a blessing which may *perhaps* bring a rescue, while a sudden death hurries it certainly to that gloomy world, whence no information has ever been brought back to us. So long as one nerve retains its strength and

toughness, so long we clutch at the possibility of existence, and it is consequently a fearful moment when the last hope disappears, and the unhappy man commits himself to fate and death with a gently muttered "It is past!"

It was a fearful night; the clouds parted, when the hurricane ceased to impel them, into dense masses; the moon cast her peaceful rays on the heaving sea of fire beneath her, increasing rather than diminishing the desolation of the surrounding scene, and the unhappy men clung to the spars, almost as much fearing as hoping for the approaching day. How long would they be able to keep afloat in the heaving sea with their weakened arms, and what must their fate be unless some vessel came to their assistance?

No one knew how far they might be from land; and in what a dangerous neighbourhood they were, even under the most favourable circumstances, between the piratical prahus of the entire archipelago, and the savage, merciless tribes of Sumatra, who, besides being furiously enraged by the constant attacks and oppression of the white men, were also accused of being cannibals! It is a sorrowful moment when one is swimming on a piece of fragile wood upon the water, and only has the prospect of being swallowed by the waves, or the almost equally insatiable shark, or being dragged from the water and sold as a slave—perchance to be devoured.

"There is land!" Frank suddenly shouted, who, after the first struggle with the waves was over, gained time and strength to look around, and now clearly recognised, even in the flickering uncertain moonlight, the high and gloomy mountain range, which rose on

the western horizon : his cry attracted the attention of Tji-kandi, who was floating close by him, and it could not longer be doubted that that was the coast, and at the same time that the storm had driven them very far westward and close to land, which they would be enabled to reach on the next day.

Tchuning and two Malays were driven on another little raft at no great distance from them ; they could hear their answering signal, that they had also discovered land, and they came up close to them by swimming and pushing. Nothing could be heard or seen of the remainder, and their shouts remained unanswered ; but the Chinese stated that he had seen several persons swimming just after the prahu sank, and the approaching daylight might bring them in sight.

The sea was still, as may be imagined, very disturbed, but ran hollow, as the sailors say ; and the breaking or overpouring of the waves, the most dangerous for poor shipwrecked men, had gradually ceased, and they drifted straight towards the coast with the western current, which always accompanies the south-eastern monsoon.

When day broke in the east, they could clearly trace not only the high and jagged mountain peaks, but also the flat belt of palms which begirt the high land, and a few hours would suffice to carry them on shore, unless some traitorous shark scented the poor fellows and selected a meal from among them.

Naturally enough their entire attention was devoted to the land, and with truly painful excitement they observed the features of the mountains that ran down close to the sea, as well as the palm-trees, in order to

be able to calculate their approach to the shore, by the objects rising higher before them. No dwellings could anywhere be seen ; but they would not have been visible from the sea, even if the coast were really inhabited, for the huts of the natives are always hidden. But not even rising smoke was to be seen, which on almost every coast delights the eye of the stranger by the certainty of the existence of human beings there. In its dark-green gloomy majesty the desert lay outstretched before them, and covered with a green impenetrable veil the mysteries which it concealed.

"A sail ! a sail !" Tchuning shouted at this moment, who had accidentally cast a glance seawards, and they could plainly distinguish, at no great distance from them, the bright, yellow, glistening, matting sail of an inland prahu, probably a fishing-boat, which seemed to be running along the coast with a half wind. It was a rather large boat, with two masts and gracefully carved bows, and it sailed like an arrow through the still restless sea.

Frank hardly perceived the sail, ere he hastened to climb up on the bamboo spars on which they had been lying, in order to give those on board her a signal, lest they might sail past without perceiving them. Tji-kandi, however, was just in time to pull him back, and then shaking his head, he said the vessel did not please him at all, and they would perhaps do better by remaining a couple of hours in the water, and then landing, than by letting the fellows in the prahu know more about them than they did at present. At the same moment, too, Tchuning gave them a signal from the other raft to keep quiet, and Frank, on attentively examining the strange boat,



saw, with his naked eye, that it was adapted for oars, and armed with two swivels in the bow and stern. There was not the slightest doubt but that they had to do here with one of the common Malay pirate boats, which cruise about through the whole archipelago, and not only plunder everything that falls into their clutches by sea, but also land on small, badly-guarded islands, and after robbing and burning, carry off men and women into slavery.

Till now the shipwrecked men had the advantage on their side: if they remained quiet, there was a possibility, even a probability, that they would not be noticed, for the low raft drifting on the water, with the dark forms projecting only a few inches above the surface, could hardly be discovered from the deck without a good glass. In addition, the prahu was at least a mile away from them, and as it had passed them, the distance that separated them would be every moment increased.

"Allah be praised!" Tji-kandi whispered, looking after the vessel, as it rose and fell on the waves." I should not have liked to go on board as passenger; but stop, what is that? they cannot see us from that distance?

"They're tacking!" Frank cried at the same moment, and, in fact, the vessel fell off from the wind, luffed, and the sails were backed. As she flew round, the little party at first fancied that she was going to steer her old course.

"They must have had a man overboard, to judge from their movements," said Frank.

Tji-kandi, however, shook his head, and said it could not have been any one from their own vessel,

for the prahu in tacking had run out of her course; "and I expect we shall have them here," he added, in a by no means joyful tone.

"They're running their old course again," one of the Malays on Tchuning's raft shouted.

"Kaya," said the Chinese, in his broad, singing tone, "it's not true; they're tacking again, and the next will bring them to pay us a visit."

"But they cannot have seen us!" cried Frank.

"It's not necessary," growled the Chinese; "they've picked up one of the others, and learned that probably some more of us are floating about; so, out of pure humanity, they are coming to pick us up."

"Perhaps they'll miss us though, if we keep very quiet," said Frank; but Tji-kandi shook his head distrustfully, and it was soon seen that he was in the right. After a couple more tacks, in which the strange vessel had come rather close to them, her deck was crowded with men, and she was steered directly toward them. A few moments later, the prahu stopped close by them, and there was a confused medley of shouts and oaths, ropes thrown out, and dragging on board the poor shipwrecked men, who felt their weakness only too perceptibly, when they attempted to give their bodies a different movement.

But the prahu had drawn so near land with the raft, in the meanwhile, that they were forced to make every possible exertion to get off again; and it was only when the strangers had placed a safe distance between themselves and the threatening reefs—for the oars could not be used in such a rough sea—that they paid any attention to the persons they had saved.

CHAPTER XIX.

WHAT THE CREW OF THE PRAHU DID WITH OUR FRIENDS. — THE PIRATICAL VESSELS OF THE EASTERN ARCHIPELAGO.

Treatment on board the pirate. A canoe alongside. The prisoners are brought on deck. Magnificent scenery. The pirate fleet. The Dyak chieftains. Their war prahus. Elegantly carved guns. Our friends are bought and sold. Removal to another vessel. Prospects of escape.

OUR friends, however, very speedily discovered what they had to expect from their new companions. Half perished from hunger and thirst, they naturally gave them in the first instance some rice to eat and a draught of fresh water. The hurried manœuvres on board the prahu allowed none of the strangers time to trouble themselves about their guests; but they had scarcely got off land, so that they could be enabled to steer their old course, before the prisoners—for such they soon learned to regard themselves—were bound and carried down into the hold, or rather “between decks,” where they were laid between the rowing seats, in such a manner that only two could converse together. At first sentries were placed over them, but these appeared not to be very attentive, for flight or resistance could not be anticipated from unarmed men—they might just as well have let them go about at liberty.

The only thing they could observe below, was the

course the vessel held, namely, northwards up the coast; but whither they were being taken was a riddle which was difficult to solve, and roused anxious fears, for the inhabitants of the coast of Sumatra stood in evil report, perhaps worse than they really deserved. Tji-kandi, who was lying close behind Frank, said in a whisper he hoped *at least* that they would be sold as slaves, for they would scarcely produce the same amount if sold by butcher's weight, at per stone.

Holding a northerly course, they must pass their former place of destination, the island of Bangka, and, in fact, they ran through Bangka straits, being tolerably secure of meeting no ship of war cruising against the wind in this monsoon. The prisoners, however, saw nothing of the land close by which they sailed, and the pirates kept all day under the coast of Sumatra, passed Palembang during the night, and were well out to sea on the following morning.

In vain Frank now desired to speak with the master of the ship, whom he possibly hoped to be able to terrify by menaces; the Dyak—for the prahu in reality belonged to Borneo, and was only on a cruise, ere it returned with the north-west monsoon, heavily laden, to its native shores—would not enter into any discussion, and for four long days they saw no one but the sentry placed over them, who, however, did not exchange a word with them, and the few Malays, who were ordered to bring them their provisions.

On the fifth day they heard another vessel hailed from the deck, and soon after a canoe came alongside. In an hour several Dyaks came down to them, and for the first time, they were unbound and led on deck. Frank now had an opportunity of counting them, and

found only two were missing, the captain and one of the Malays.

Mournfully the poor fellows went on deck, for they justly apprehended that now a decisive change in their destiny would probably entail something worse for them than captivity, in which they still entertained a hope of being found and released by some European ship. But, when once landed, and probably dragged by their new masters into the interior, what prospect would they have of escaping, or returning to their home? Might they not, besides, be destined to send up a sweet savour into the nostrils of some pagan—horrible image!—or worse still, of being criticised by their masters after death, as to whether their flesh was tender or tough? *

All these thoughts, however interesting they must be for the acting personages of this little drama, were dispersed, at least as far as Frank was concerned, directly he reached the deck, and found himself close under the palm-clad, finely-wooded, magnificent coast of the immense island of Sumatra.

The prahu was riding at anchor, and scarce five hundred paces from them rose a tremendous acclivity, surmounted by a tall, jagged, irregular crater, from whose yawning cavity the thick, dense smoke rose toward the sky.

But though his first glance was directed to the really magnificent scenery that surrounded him, still his attention was soon drawn to the sea, and the busy life going on upon it; for around them tossed and swam a multitude of smaller and larger prahus and canoes, and light sailing-boats glided in and out between them, fruit boats came from the shore,

heavily laden, probably to get the vessels ready for a more lengthened voyage; and as far as his eye could see on the horizon, Frank observed several small sails, as it seemed, stationed as sentinels, in case a strange vessel approached, or the black smoke of a distant steamer, their most dangerous enemy, became visible on the horizon.

It was only too evident that they were at anchor here in the centre of one of those numerous piratical fleets which, even at the present day, and despite all the cruisers and steamers stationed there, traverse the island-dotted archipelago, and plunder and devastate the coasts with their savage, bloodthirsty hordes. A quantity of chieftains from the various coasts, who possessed no territory — among them Arab chiefs who carry war into every country — formed themselves into little fleets, to whom the thousand secret bays and straits of the archipelago afforded shelter, as soon as they needed it, and whence they set out again with renewed strength and new thirst for plunder, as soon as any threatening danger was past, or the monsoon, which favoured them so much, had set in.

The pirates did not regard their life and behaviour as dishonouring; like the old Vikingers, several great piratical princes cruised about, collected tribute where it was paid voluntarily, desolated with fire and sword all who opposed them, and swept the sea of all the peaceable traders who came within their reach. But more sanguinary than ever any robbers on land, these pirate ships have always demanded, and *still* demand, a far greater expenditure of human life: too easy an opportunity is afforded them on the water, not only

to render their victims innocuous for the moment, but also to save themselves any troublesome witnesses at a later date, and a cast into the watery depths appears to them an easy murder. The sea destroys all traces momentarily, while the murderer on land can ever see in the blood he has shed, or the corpse he has buried, an accuser rise up against him; but the pirate's prahu gently glides with swelling sails over the spot which was the witness of the horrors, and swallowed up the victims.

The pirates of Mindanao, one of the Philippines, are the most notorious; their ships are known and feared on almost every coast, and their deeds form the subject of countless ballads and songs through the whole of the archipelago. .

These vessels were by no means built only to harass Indian prahus, and wage war with little fishing-boats; they were even dangerous to European merchant vessels, attacked every ship that came in their way, and was not known to be a man-of-war; indeed, recently they even attacked an American cruiser, and pressed it so close, that the captain could scarcely drive off the multitude of prahus that beset him, and was very glad to escape from such hot quarters with a favourable breeze.

The large war prahus are very sharp, both at the bow and stern, and lie flat on the water, but are of such a length, some of them nearly ninety feet, that the vessel really appears narrow. In some of these prahus there are double rowing-benches, with as many as a hundred slaves, who, however, take part in the contest only in extreme cases. These boats carry special warriors to board vessels, selected from their

bravest tribes, thirty, forty, sometimes sixty or eighty in number.

Many of the prahus are provided with a bulwark on the bows, which a common, not too heavy cannon-ball cannot penetrate ; and others have given this a peculiar but so appropriate form, that balls cannot strike them full, but glance over on either side. This, however, only helps the prahu, as long as she rows or sails stem on towards the hostile vessel, but it is not possible to render the sides of the vessel bullet-proof, as the long oars must have full play. Besides a few carronades, generally six-pounders—but sometimes twenty-pounders, the latter of which are fixed in the bows, where there is a narrow port-hole through the bulwark,—their principal offensive arm is the swivel, of which they generally carry several, and manœuvre excellently. These guns are generally made of brass, and are of splendid manufacture ; many of them with the stamps of European foundries, for these vessels have been plundering the ships of all sea-going nations for centuries, and have obtained tribute from nearly every country.

The regular war prahus have no fixed mast, but only a species of easily-raised bamboo post, on which a gigantic sail projecting far overboard is hoisted, and sends the vessel along at a tremendous speed. Their bows are generally adorned with fluttering flags, or strips of the bleached leaves of the palmetto palm, and they look most romantic, with their heavily-armed warriors on deck.

But we must not forget our friends too long ; they now saw another prahu, considerably smaller than their own, steering directly towards them, and evi-

dently coming alongside. Signals were exchanged between the two crews; the Malays of Mindanao conversed in very lively terms together, and, as it seemed, about their prisoners, but the language was strange to them; they could not understand a word of them, and though they listened attentively to the strange sounds, they sank back, deceived and desponding, into their old position.

But the Mindanao dialect was not unfamiliar to all of them; Tchuning, as it was soon proved, had understood more of it than any of their present masters could expect, and drawing gently, and as if accidentally, to Frank's side, he whispered to him that they were going to be put on board the approaching prahu, carried some distance up the coast to a settlement of the Sumatrans, and probably be sold there.

Any resistance was of course impossible: the Malays had not, it is true, taken the trouble to bind them again, but surrounded as they were by a countless swarm of hostile prahus, what could they have effected against numbers? There was nothing left then but to yield, and wait for some more favourable moment which might perhaps present itself. If anything really dangerous to their life was designed, both Frank and the Chinese were firmly determined not to let themselves be led like lambs to the slaughter.

The smaller prahu now came alongside, ropes were thrown out, to fasten them together bow and stern, and a bartering was commenced, as it seemed, to estimate the value of the prisoners against a quantity of other objects, among which gold-dust could be seen. At length, they came to an agreement, and it was only about the Chinese that they could not settle

matters. The pirates demanded more than the Sumatrans would give, for this prahu appeared to be a coaster, and a species of merry barter was now carried on for the poor wretch, during which one of the chieftains repeatedly took his pigtail in his hand and drew attention to its length, and his people on each occasion broke out into a noisy burst of laughter.

Tchuning cast a timid glance around; he was not at all pleased at one of the Sumatrans taking him by the shoulder, and feeling his ribs and arms. Tchuning was a fat fellow, and he and Tji-kandi seemed to have fetched the best prices. At length, they had agreed even about *him*, the shipwrecked men were compelled to go into the other prahu, and all were permitted to go about at liberty, with the exception of the Chinese and Tji-kandi, who were put into a small railed-off place. Tchuning sighed, not without reason, into his companion's ear, "he entertained very strong suspicions that they were only kept apart to feed them up a little, and employ them on some extraordinary festivity, as a rare delicacy." Tji-kandi's brow was bathed with perspiration, and he prayed to Allah fervently to defer this festivity for at least four weeks, when he would have grown so thin from terror and care, that he would not be fit either for roasting or boiling.

To their astonishment they saw, too, that the prahu was not going to land in the neighbourhood of the fleet; they were steering straight out to sea, not to be impeded by the south-easter, and appeared to be keeping a northerly course, when towards evening a sail, which certainly belonged to an European ship, became visible to windward. The prahu probably did

not like to cross her track, for she fell off from the wind immediately and drew nearer to the coast, until the sail, which kept its course, probably for Singapore, had disappeared a few hours later on the horizon.

Then evening drew on, and Frank had, in the meanwhile, made himself acquainted with the condition of the prahu, and the number of the crew, as far as he could. They were tall and powerful fellows, these sons of torrid Sumatra, and well armed, each with his khris or dagger at his side, even during the most peaceful occupations of the day. The chief armoury was in the cabin, and Frank was very glad to receive a summons from the captain to come down there, and tell him where they came from, whither they were bound, and the circumstances of the shipwreck, which the Mindanao pirates had informed him of. Frank, however, spoke Malay too imperfectly to be able to explain all this to him to his satisfaction, and was again sent up on deck with great harshness, while Tji-kandi was ordered to take his place, and kept on talking for nearly an hour and a half.

When Tji-kandi returned on deck and was carried back to his pen, Frank tried to steal to his side and hear his opinion about the possibility of their liberation, but the Malay was much too cautious to expose himself heedlessly to the risk of a discovery, and only whispered to Frank hurriedly and secretly, to get hold of a knife, if he possibly could, so that he could work his way out of his bamboo pen at evening, and have the Malays in readiness for a *coup de main*.

This was a ticklish commission; every weapon, even the smallest knife, had been taken from them, and if he were detected, their whole plan might be

frustrated by the greater vigilance of their foes. Besides, the next morning would probably bring them into the vicinity of a larger fleet, when every attempt to regain their liberty would be utter madness.

Fortunately, the breeze held on, and they were not compelled to take to the oars. The vessel glided quickly and lightly over the slightly heaving sea, and the prisoners, with the exception of Tchuning and Tji-kandi, were generally left to their own devices. Thus the young man succeeded at last in taking a knife from the cook's galley, and handing it to the prisoner, and one of the Malays to whom he had told his design danced close before the cabin one of their Javan national dances, in order to attract the attention of the idling sailors.

The approach of twilight collected the whole crew on the deck of the little vessel, while a battle-plan was drawn up between Tji-kandi and one of the other prisoners, which would bring them either liberty or death on that very evening; and the fear which the Malays especially entertained of being eaten, and the preceding preliminaries of roasting or baking, was of no little service in exciting their not superabundant courage to a desperate determination.

CHAPTER XX.

HOW THE MALAYS EXECUTED A WAR-DANCE, AND
HOW THEY ENDED IT.—THE LANDING.

The war-dance, and its execution. The unexpected termination.

- Frank defends the cabin. A fight with a Malay. A fortunate rescue. Destruction of the whole crew. The prahu runs ashore. Landing provisions. A stockade is built.

Two of the Javanese Malays were in fact excellent dancers, and enchained the attention of their new masters to such a degree, that they pressed round them in a dense circle, and testified their approbation by loud exclamations of pleasure.

One of the Malays, a young fellow of scarce more than sixteen years of age, had disguised himself as a girl, by the assistance of his sarong and by removing his head-cloth; and the other, a very tall, muscular fellow, from the Thousand Islands, who had been mate on board the prahu, and held a certain rank, supported him with such savage grace and energy, that the delight of the spectators was incessant. His name was Pulo Pulo, called so from the word *pulo*, meaning an island, as a reference to the place of his birth.

The captain of the prahu at last requested to see one of their real war-dances, which are being gradually forgotten in Java, and the last dancer, gladly acquiescing in the wish, selected three others—and those the strongest of his comrades—to represent their fatherland, as he said, worthily in the eyes of the inhabitants of Sumatra.

But, as they wanted a considerable space, they formed a circle as large as the deck allowed, and in this manner divided their jailors, who had, in fact, only eyes for the dance just commenced.

Two and two, the Malays, now took their places opposite each other, and at first to the sound of a small, strangely-shaped drum, belonging to the cook, they commenced the introduction, that began with a friendly dance, in which a quarrel gradually broke out, and degenerated into a regular fight. The young Malay, dressed as a girl, formed the centre of the dancing-band with a species of pantomime, in which the four dancers behaved like so many lovers, and finally, while the savage fair one escaped from their power, they commenced a fight of two against two in wild jealousy.

The introduction was executed with that bold but still natural grace, which characterises all such natural dancers, let their movements appear ever so strange, and apparently unnatural; the dancing-girl, now attired as a Bayadere, with glistening gold pieces in her hair (the probable result of some successful foray) which the captain had lent her, danced in the centre of the four men, first with one, then with the other; and whenever she appeared to favour one especially, the others gave way to menacing movements, as if they were about to engage in deadly conflict. But the disguised maid never allowed it to go so far, she so rapidly changed her favoured lover; and the spectators shouted with delight at the masterly executed transition from jealousy to triumph, and from triumph to the deceived hopes of the dancer.

The moon rose and cast her mild light upon the

motley and picturesquely grouped band. On the top of the light bamboo roof of the cabin, with his straw cigar in his mouth, reclined the captain of the little vessel, looking down at the dance beneath him; and close before him, so that he could just see over their heads, stood six or seven of his people; while the others, perhaps fifteen or sixteen in number, enclosed the dancers on the other side.

Frank, with the rest of his companions, was among the spectators, and only the steerer was excluded from the enjoyment of the spectacle. Their course lay again from north to east, and as near to the land as they could venture, in consequence of the possibility of a storm rising. Still they could clearly trace the dark coast on the lee, in the moonlight, which stretched out to the west of them like a long, dark wall.

The dance had in the meanwhile become more wild and animated; and Pulo Pulo called to one of the Sumatrans to give them two handspikes and two lances, to represent the different parties. Nearly everybody hurried to meet their wishes; and a few minutes later, the four Malays were standing opposite to each other in a war-dance, which they commenced by bending over first to the right, then to the left with upraised weapons, as if trying to find some uncovered place on their opponent's person. The pretended girl was still standing in the middle, and seemed to be timidly escaping the threatening weapons of both parties. The couples menaced one another still more furiously; their movements grew more and more violent; until Pulo Pulo went close past the disguised lad and whispered a few words in his ear.

The pretended girl glided away, and among the spectators, who laughingly made room for her; but at the same moment the young fellow rose to his full height, tore the khris from the belt of one of the bystanders, and drove it into his side, while the captain, whom Pulo Pulo struck furiously across the temples with a handspike, fell back senseless and let his head hang over the deck.

The moment was ruinous for the former owners of the prahu: before they could rightly comprehend what was going on, and how the sports of their slaves had been converted into such fearful earnestness, the heavy handspikes of Pulo Pulo and his comrade crashed on their skulls, and the lances they had themselves furnished drank their warm heart-blood. Three succeeded in escaping to the quarter-deck, where the mate joined them; another portion found safety in the bows; but here Tji-kandi and Tehuning, who had also found a couple of lances, threw themselves upon them and dispersed them, for they were quite confounded, and did not really know how many foes they had to contend with.

Frank himself had taken an active part in the contest, for, tearing a khris from one of the first who fell, he boldly attacked a gigantic Sumatran warrior, who was just aiming a deadly blow at Pulo Pulo. His weapon passed beneath his upraised arm into his chest, and the man fell dead on the deck. Then, however, being well aware how necessary it was to take possession of the cabin, where the whole of the arms were kept, he sprang down the light bamboo ladder, and arrived just in time to prevent the enemy from entering by one of the hind windows or port-holes.

The three fugitives, namely, whom the mate had joined, hardly perceived how matters were on deck, than their first thought was naturally to gain the cabin, and then, with the fire-arms in their power, to bring the victory speedily on their side, for till then not a single shot had been fired; but Frank scarcely perceived the body of the first obscuring the port-hole, than he seized one of the lances arranged against the wall, and ran the enemy through with it. A fall into the water announced his victory directly after; but, at the same moment, another Sumatran attempted to enter by the left hand port-hole, though in vain, for he was transfixed by the lance; while another dark form sprang through the right hand-port, and would probably have killed Frank, had not Tji-kandi and Tchuning, equally well aware of the importance of the place, reached the cabin just at the right time to protect the young European from the raging Sumatran, and render the latter innocuous. Transfixed by the lances of both, the last two enemies were destroyed, and tearing the guns from the wall, the three sprung again on deck, in order to end the contest raging there.

They were hardly wanted—the surprise seemed to have been complete; the Sumatrans, deprived of their leader by the first blow, thought no more of gaining the victory, but rather of saving their own lives.

The two last of the entire crew had taken refuge on the little mast or pole, on which the broad matting sail was hoisted, and defended themselves here with the most desperate fury against their foes, who tried to stab with their lances.

Tji-kandi and Tchuning ran quickly with their

guns toward them: but Frank scarcely perceived their intention when he threw himself in their way, and begged them to spare the lives of the two unfortunate wretches.

"Let them live!" he cried, and moved the barrels of their guns on one side, which they had already pointed at their victims; "they can do us no more harm."

"But they can betray us!" shouted the gigantic Pulo Pulo, who sprang up furiously, covered with blood and perspiration, and hurled the young man on one side; "down with them!" he thundered at the same time to the two gunners, and taking the third musket from the hands of the German, the three shots cracked simultaneously, and the unhappy men fell down from their eminence on deck, and were thrown overboard without further delay by the natives.

They were free, though it had been purchased by a terrible amount of blood; and so utter must have been the surprise of the Sumatrans, who fancied themselves perfectly secure, that only two of the Malays had been killed and three slightly wounded. Among the dead was the young lad who had played the part of the girl in the dance, and had struck the first blow at the heart of an enemy: he lay with a gaping wound in his chest, and the gold ornaments still in his hair; and the friends had collected round him, to see whether any life was left in him, when, suddenly, a violent blow shook the little vessel to its keel, and the Malays, now forgetting all else, turned their entire attention to the vessel itself.

The latter, namely, so long as the fight lasted, had

been utterly neglected, with not even a man at the tiller, had drifted nearer and nearer to the lee coast, and now struck on a bank of coral or rock, from which, however, it was again liberated by a few minutes of violent stamping, and brought into deeper water. The Malays, though so weak in numbers, went seriously to work to set their newly-acquired vessel in order, and get it under sail: Frank proceeded to the tiller, and the others hoisted the huge matting sail right in the wind, in order to get off the coast. They were going to stand straight out to sea, and gain the track of vessels running between Java and Singapore, in order that they might not fall into the hands of pirates again, and perhaps be compelled to account for their possession of the prahu.

They soon brought the graceful vessel on the other bow, but Tji-kandi, who had not been pleased by the blow on the rock, climbed down into the hold, and speedily found his worst suspicions confirmed. There were more than three feet of water in it; and though he immediately sprung on deck again, and called the crew to bale out, they soon saw that they would not be able to keep the severely injured prahu long above water. At any rate they did not dare to go further out to sea, where it was always a matter of uncertainty about finding a ship; and, turning the bow once again toward land, their only hope lay in reaching it,—shipwrecked a second time,—before the leaking prahu sank under them.

The wind was fortunately favourable for them; they sailed quickly up to the coast under a fresh breeze; but spite of their incessant baling, the prahu grew gradually heavier in the water. When they at length

saw the dark strip of land so close before them that they could recognise the jagged outline of the forest on the nearest slopes, fortunately for them the bow of the prahu ran dead on a sand-bank: the vessel wore round before the wind, then heeled over to leewards, while the slight materials of which her upper works were composed, as well as the steep sand-bank, prevented her from sinking to the bottom.

Their distance from the coast could not be very great, but they could not undertake anything before daybreak; they had no occasion either to fear that they would float again; the hull was not only too full of water, but they soon found that the ebb set in toward morning, and carried them still more firmly on to the firm sand. Their life, therefore, was secured as far as the sea was concerned, and their only care would now be to carry on shore as much as possible of the provisions, as they of course did not know how they would be received and treated by the dwellers on the coast.

Thus day slowly arrived, and when the gloomy mist-veils, which had lain on the water during the last hour before morning, gradually cleared away, the thickly wooded hospitable coast lay extended only a few hundred paces before them, and seemed to stretch out its arms to receive them, for they had drifted into a little sandy bay, in which the water fell so considerably that they were enabled to wade on land by sunset.

The time was employed by them quickly enough, and, after a short council of war, all armed themselves to the teeth and started for land, laden with all the provisions they could carry. They, however, ap-

proached the coast with extreme caution, for they could not be aware whether an enemy might not oppose their landing, or an ambush threaten their lives as soon as they set foot on dry land.

But it did not appear so: no enemy was to be seen; there was not even smoke visible along the whole coast range, as probably just at this spot the low depth of water had prevented the natives from settling; and unattacked, unimpeded, they reached land after a sharp but short march. Rendered confident by this, when they had placed everything in safety which they had brought on shore, they determined on returning once again to the wreck to save a second load; they therefore hid their weapons carefully in the bushes, and carried on shore during the course of the forenoon nearly all the guns, with a considerable quantity of ammunition and rice, at least enough to support them for a month.

The flood-tide interrupted their labours, for the water became too deep, and there was no canoe on board by which they could maintain the communication with the land.

But what to do now? Seek a tribe of the natives, and yield themselves unconditionally to them, or march up and down the coast in an armed band, until they reached a port and found by chance some European vessel of war, or perchance a peaceful European trader—both were equally dangerous. Pulo Pulo, who seemed to be acquainted with the dwellers on this coast, advised them, simply to throw up a little earthwork at this spot, which did not appear to be frequently visited by the natives, and then to set to work building a small boat or canoe, which

would not occupy them a week, as they could fetch their implements at the next ebb from the wreck. But then there would be no other choice left them than to stand out to sea as quickly as possible, and gain the track of European vessels, many of which would arrive during the prevalence of this monsoon, or at least to get out of reach of the Sumatrans, from whom he appeared to anticipate an unpleasant interruption and still worse treatment.

After a long discussion it was at last found that Pulo Pulo's advice was certainly the best, and in order to employ the flood-tide as well as possible, they went to work to find a favourable spot for the camp, in whose vicinity it was requisite that a couple of suitable trees should be standing, to dig out a double canoe without being exposed to the danger of being attacked while at work by a hostile tribe, and be cut off from their encampment.

Both these objects were found at no great distance from the banks of a small stream, which rustled merrily through a dense thicket of magnificent fruit-trees and palms. Here, too, were several trees excellently suited for the purpose, which they could fell, and employ in arranging their camp; and they impatiently awaited the next ebb-tide to fetch all they required for the execution of their plan, and then set to work without further delay.

Fortunately, the weather remained calm, and, swimming ashore before the water had fallen to the lowest mark, they set to work diligently in composing a small raft of the upper bamboo spars, on which they could arrange all they intended to take on shore at once, and thus easily land it.

Here, however, Frank persuaded them to take the little swivel, fastened in the bows of the prahu, with them, which might do them excellent service eventually ; and although Pulo Pulo, who had assumed the supreme command, did not seem to have much inclination, he at least yielded, and allowed them to put it on the raft with the requisite ammunition, which brought it quite down to the water's edge. They carried it safely ashore, and then returned on board for another cargo. But it had grown so late, that the water began to rise again before they reached the wreck the second time ; still they could load their little raft quietly, and then push it on shore by swimming behind it, which they effected before night-fall.

And it was high time too, for just at midnight the wind rose to a gale ; it howled over the sea in wild fury, and the crested waves rose with irresistible force, and drove the drizzling foam up to the summit of the cocoa-palms, so that the clear salt water poured down their graceful trunks.

But it was so far fortunate for the shipwrecked men, that the wreck parted at the first outburst of the storm, and the fragments were washed ashore among the mangroves and other bushes that covered the coast ; it would, therefore, be impossible for them to be discovered by means of the wreck, and arms and provisions once in security, they began on the next morning to build and fortify their encampment with their united strength.

In the first place, they felled the two trees standing only a few paces apart, which they intended to use for their canoes, and then began to erect the pali-

sades of the fort around them, so that the trunks, upon which they would have to work, were within the encampment. They then cleared the forest as far as they were able, in order not to be easily surprised by an hostile attack, and formed out of the trunks they thus obtained a species of palisade fence, behind which they could await in perfect safety the attack of any superior numbers. The inner space was purposely rendered as narrow as possible, in order that they might not have a long line of palisade to defend, but the little stream was contained within it, so that they might not suffer from a want of water, in case they were invested.

After all this had been arranged, and the swivel ready for immediate use on a roughly nailed framework, they set to work at building a little cabin for themselves, which they covered with banana and pandanus leaves, and then employed the next day in collecting and storing every variety of fruit which grew in the neighbourhood.

CHAPTER XXI.

HOW OUR FRIENDS WERE SURPRISED BY A NATIVE,
WHOSE VISIT THEY WERE NOT AT ALL PREPARED
FOR.

- Tropical scenery. Clearing the jungle. Fruit gathering. The tiger's visit. Habits of the animal. Death of a Malay. A trap for the tiger. Frank up a tree.

THERE is a peculiar charm in tropical scenery ; and just as in our home beeches and oaks represent northern vegetation, and the dense masses of pine cast their gloomy shadows over the wide mountain slopes, so palms and waringhi are the characteristics of the torrid zone, and the broad-leaved bananas or pisangs, with the tough and creeping plants, and the broad glistening leaves of the remaining vegetation, announce, by their peculiar trembling rustling, the strange, extraordinary world around, and fill the heart of the northman with a mysterious, holy awe, and deep reverence.

The Malays regarded the surrounding scenery with all possible indifference—it was something which they saw daily around them in their own home, and they found nothing extraordinary in it. Frank, on the other hand, though he had wandered over the beautiful Java, had never yet seen the forest in such savage and magnificent beauty, and really revelled in the enjoyment of this splendour.

At the spot on which they had formed their encampment, the klewangs of the natives had caused great destruction in the jungle, as their axes had done

among the trees ; but hardly fifty paces off, the wilderness in all its glory surrounded them, and the dense undergrowth of wild coffee-trees, and countless other flowering and fruit trees, lay like a green sea on the hill side, above which the graceful stems of the cocoa, aren, cabbage, and areka palms rose. Through the centre of them the little lively stream rattled, over coloured, glistening pebbles, and in the actual forest the sun could find but a few little spots through which to steal, and gaze on its children, the fragrant flowers beneath — and yet they all raised their tiny heads towards the luminary, and had so gladly enticed it down to them through the closely interlaced and envious branches.

Only a single tree was left standing in this encampment, a splendid variety of the acacia, which bears a blood-red berry, the *saga hayve*. It stretched its boughs far over the little square, affording the poor shipwrecked mariners shade against the hot sunbeams, which otherwise would have revenged themselves fearfully here for what they lost in the adjoining dense forest.

Out of the fan-like leaves of the cocoa-palm the Malays contrived to make famous baskets, and with these they had been busily engaged the whole day in collecting the over-ripe mangistan and yambos, ramboutans, and yanghas ; and, above all, a large stock of cocoa-nuts. Tchuning, who undertook the duties of a cook again, had ordered a small cellar, or rather hole, in the ground to be dug to keep them fresh ; and Frank proposed, while the others were collecting fruit, to make an attempt to penetrate into the forest, and kill some game, that they might once again

regale themselves with fresh meat, for which they were all longing.

But Tji-kandi urgently dissuaded him, and would not consent to his going on any account, as he was ignorant of the dangers that would menace him alone in such a wilderness; but when he saw that young headstrong persisted in his design, he requested, at least, to accompany him. But even this Frank would not consent to: one man made noise enough in the thicket to scare the game, and so render success impossible.

So, shouldering his gun, and with one of the common long knives at his side, he left the encampment toward evening, and stopped for a little with Pulo Pulo and another Malay, the former of whom had mounted a cocoa-tree to throw down the ripest nuts, while the other was shaking a young mangistan-tree, and collecting the splendid fruit that descended in a shower.

He was still standing and gossiping with them, when he fancied he heard a noise in a bush at no great distance from them—he listened, but all was again quiet; and the Malay by his side declared he had heard nothing, but left off shaking for a little while, to see whether the noise would be renewed. All was perfectly silent; and Frank now crawled in the direction of the bush, in the hope of coming up with some timid animal, which the sound of human voices had driven from their neighbourhood.

But the forest was so tremendously dense just at this spot, that the young German could only advance step by step, fearing to make too much noise with chopping and breaking the branches. In vain he

attempted to discover a fresh trail on the soft ground, which was so covered with moss and leaves, that even an unpractised eye could plainly distinguish the marks of any large animal, though he might not be able to decide what description of beast they belonged to.

Several bushes had, in fact, been trodden down here, and the moss at the foot of a broad-boughed dadap especially betrayed the lately-imprinted foot-marks of some large animal, and Frank was just stooping down to examine them, when a shriek in the direction he had just come from reached his ear, and made him start up hurriedly. The cry was immediately re-echoed by another, which seemed to come out of the air; it was evident that something terrible had happened.

He was not long in doubt on the subject; just as he reached the spot where the nearly-filled fruit-baskets were standing, he saw an immense tiger disappear in a thicket of wild coffee-bushes, bearing one of the Malays on its back, but as little impeded by the burden as it were a child; and though he instantly raised his rifle to his shoulder, he did not dare to fire, through fear of hitting the man.

"Matjan!" Pulo Pulo shouted at the same time, as he slid down the cocoa-palm, "shoot him! shoot him!"

But Frank required no further encouragement; and with his gun raised, he walked boldly into the opening through which the beast had just disappeared with its victim, and he could distinctly hear the bushes trampled down just in front of him. The tiger—although the strength of this animal is really extraordinary, for its immense paws seem to consist, in



A NATIVE OF SUMATRA

fact, of nothing but muscle and sinew—had been, however, hindered by the thicket, and had not been able to escape so rapidly with its prey, but that Frank could get again into gun-shot, and now determined on making an attempt at least; he raised the gun, and fired directly at the body of the animal, just as it was making ready for a leap.

The tiger, though so terrible in its fury, when excited by passion, or through hunger, is, after all, a cowardly brute, that timidly flies the eye of man, when possible, and only ventures to leap on its prey from a safe ambush. In fact, there is not a single savage animal, with the exception of the shark, perhaps, that does not ever fly from man, in spite of the multitude of fables narrated about lions and tigers, bears, panthers, snakes, crocodiles, and other terrible beasts. Such stories are generally exaggerated, if not entirely inventions, for every traveller, though perhaps almost ignorant of loading a gun, much less of hunting with it, always likes to have had an adventure, especially if he has been in a country where the inhabitants have told him that wild beasts are now and then seen, and must naturally have one terrible story to narrate at least, in which he escaped a fearful danger only with great difficulty, and through his presence of mind.

How rarely does the real hunter, who wanders in the woods all day, and sleeps there at night, meet a savage beast of prey? He may watch the stag, that goes quietly grazing the woods, but the shy wolf, the panther in the northern forests, and the tiger and lion in the southern, are themselves too frequently engaged in the chase, and listen to the slightest noise of a cracking branch, or even a falling leaf. If it is a man

that they hear approach, and whom they do not count as their prey, then they withdraw timidly and hurriedly to their hiding-place, and fly from the neighbourhood in which their arch-foe is watching for them.

In the same way the myth about the rattle-snake originated, which is said to fascinate its victim by the eye, and then swallow it. According to the fable, a mysterious power enchains the bird, on whom the snake's glance is once firmly fixed, to the spot, and it strives in vain to escape; the snake only requires to keep its eyes fixed, and then slowly to writhe up and seize it. The rattle-snake would be forced to die of starvation, if it had to trust only to this power of the eyes, for there is not a living creature who has been witness of it, while hundreds of hunters have observed the crafty reptile gliding noiselessly through the grass, and springing on its unsuspecting victim, when it has reached the proper distance. It flies man like any other snake does, and only when startled by his sudden approach, it raises itself and sounds its warning rattle, rather as a sign of fear than of anger.

Such fearful fables have been also accredited to the vegetable kingdom, for it was formerly asserted of the Javanese upas or poison-tree, that its exhalations were so fearful as to kill the bird that flew over it; while the tree itself scarcely contains more poison than does the hemlock, and only in its sap possesses any deadly effect. But we men love everything strange or extraordinary; and when anything is told us in which our own fancy is interested, we adorn it as much as we can, and think over it so much, until we believe it ourselves.

The tiger, the most savage, blood-thirsty brute in

the world, forms no exception to this rule. Certainly, when it can spring on its prey from its hiding-place, it darts its fearful claws into it, and rushes with furious bounds to its thicket; but it can be terrified with equal facility; frequently the bold interference of a single man causes it to drop its prey, and if it hears the hunter breaking through the branches and bushes, it crawls on its stomach, and presses close to the ground through the high grass or dense bush, to some secure hiding-place.

In the same way the elephant, the rhinoceros, or the grey bear of the Rocky Mountains, the largest of all beasts of prey, fly from man, and only when greatly aroused does a single brute forget its general fear; but then woe to the unhappy man who crosses its track, for unless the bullet has struck the right spot at starting, no matter whether it prove fatal eventually, the wounded or only infuriated animal feels then no pain, knows no danger, and hurls itself in wild frenzy on its foe, whom it tears in pieces, or tramples under foot.

Frank, however, did not know this danger, or if he did so, paid no attention to it; for without taking time to reload his gun, and solely animated by the thought of saving the unhappy man, he drew his klewang, and sprang with a loud shout upon the animal. The tiger, however, who fancied there was a great deal too much noise about such a trifle, let its prey fall, and crept with its tail between its legs into a thicket of thorny rattans, into which Frank could not have followed it, even had he desired to do so, so thickly were the thorny creepers intertwined with the branches, and round the bushes. But he did not

think of rushing after the tiger, when he saw his unhappy companion lying at his feet, and throwing away both rifle and klewang, he attempted to recall the unfortunate Malay to life, who was covered with blood.

It was useless; the beast had seized and bitten through his throat with only too sure a gripe, and life had fled long before. Even the wound in his side, where the tiger had seized him in the flight, would have been sufficient to kill him.

Pulo Pulo had, in the meantime, come down from the palm-tree, from which he had witnessed the attack of the wild beast, but had not been able to give any assistance, and Tehuning, now summoned by his cries, also hurried up. He had been gathering sirih-leaves for chewing, in the neighbourhood, and appeared not a little confounded at the danger to which he had also been exposed.

"Mati—dead!" the Malay, however, said in a monotonous tone, and turned away with a shudder, when he perceived the wound in the neck of the unfortunate man: there was no hope of saving him, and the men now consulted as to what to do with the corpse. Frank wished to have it buried at once on the spot, but Tehuning remarked that, if they left the body lying there, and kept watch in one of the trees during the night, they might be sure the tiger would return to fetch its prey, and then his hide might pay the penalty for the murder.

There was something uncomfortable to the young German in the idea of leaving the body of a man as a bait in the forest; but the old spirit of the chase soon overcame this feeling, and when his comrades

had been informed of the melancholy accident, and they had devoured their frugal repast, he and Tehuning—for Pulo Pulo refused to have anything to do with it—looked out two suitable trees in the vicinity, where the thick branches allowed but little of the moonlight to fall through, and their guns commanded the little strip of land between them.

Evening had scarcely set in, ere the two hunters, to whom Tji-kandi had recommended the greatest caution, took their places.

Tji-kandi was not at all satisfied with the expedition; their little garrison, he thought, and very rightly, had been already too much weakened, to allow a fourth part of it to remain outside the whole night roosting in trees like wild turkeys, and if anything occurred to either of them, they would be all lost. Our two hunters, however, could not be dissuaded, and Pulo Pulo himself allowed it would be perhaps better to kill the tiger, which had tasted human blood, or else it would have an appetite for more, and none of them would be sure of their lives on quitting the palisades.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE WATCH FOR THE TIGER, AND THE STRANGE
SORT OF GAME FRANK STARTED.

The watch for the tiger. Tehuning displays his prudence. Frank kills something. The natives attack him. Frank is taken prisoner. A cross-examination. Departure of the natives. Frank is left under a guard.

FRANK had selected for his seat a young waringhi-tree, one of whose branches projected just over the spot where the corpse lay, so that the tiger would be within shot if it approached its victim again; while Tehuning, with due regard for his own safety, chose a low cocoa-palm, which, though certainly close to the spot, was still too hidden by bushes to allow a full view of the scene. Both sat about fifty yards apart, but not a word was exchanged between them, for fear of warning the beast of the danger that awaited it; and Frank especially listened with the closest attention to the slightest sound, in the hope of hearing the creeping, stealthy step of the tiger. The moon had, in the meanwhile, risen; and threw its pale, uncertain light over the narrow clearing, and the corpse lying there, and the tall waving leaves of the palms cast a flickering, misty shade over the tall grass in which the corpse lay bedded.

Frank suddenly fancied that he saw something moving at no great distance from the palm on which Tehuning had taken his seat, and when he looked anxiously across, to see whether the Chinese had not

also noticed the object, moving as it were under his barrel, he could not see the least sign of his comrade, although the light of the moon fell directly upon the tuft of the palm-tree, and he had seen only a few minutes before his shining head in the centre of it. What on earth had become of Tehuning?

The object below him, however, occupied too much of his attention for him to trouble himself much about the Chinese, and silently and noiselessly looking to his rifle, lest it might misfire at the decisive moment, he thrust the barrel cautiously over a branch, on which he found an excellent rest for it, and tried before all to take a certain aim at the moving object, whatever it might be.

But this was not by any means so easy: for in the dense shadow he could not even perceive the end of the barrel, much less the glistening sight upon it; and below all had again become so quiet and motionless, that he really began to fancy he had deceived himself, and taken the movement of some branch or bough in the wind for that of some living being. But he was soon undeceived in this respect, for he now saw clearly and unmistakeably some dark object leave the shade of the bush, and crawl through the grass towards the outstretched corpse, as if it scented its prey, but did not quite believe in its quietude, and wished first to convince itself that it was perfectly harmless.

Frank was quite astray as to the utter disappearance of his companion, and at last fancied that he must have fallen asleep in his far from comfortable seat in the palm-tree.

After casting a hurried glance across, the moon now favoured him by falling directly on his barrel,

and his eye was looking for the best spot on the carcass of his creeping visitor, when he saw another moving point close by.

There were two, and which was the right one? It was strange, for he had never heard that two tigers had been seen hunting together; and was it possible that one had fetched the other to share the already killed prey with it? The first must surely be the man-eater, and without any further delay, he took a long and careful aim at the foremost dark body, and pulled the trigger.

The shot echoed with the noise of thunder through the majestic forest, but a yelling cry of human voices gave him an almost louder reply, and while the body, at which he had first fired, lay motionless on the ground, dark forms appeared on every side of the clearing, and before the startled youth could even think about loading his gun, he felt, by the shaking of the bough on which he was sitting, that his nocturnal foes, easily conjecturing the situation in which he was, had climbed the same tree, and were coming up to take him prisoner.

The approach of danger, however, restored him his whole presence of mind immediately, and quickly thrusting a cartridge, which he had made beforehand for his fancied sport, down the barrel, he had time enough to put on a cap, when the first leapt upon him from a branch overhead, and the next moment, shot through the breast by the barrel that almost touched him, fell down on the ground with a loud yell. But others pressed forward; Frank had no room to use the butt end, for he had much difficulty in maintaining his balance, and letting the gun fall, he

tore his klewang from its sheath and shouted for help, determined on defending his post, until Tchuning, who must have been awakened by the shots, could hasten to his assistance, or his friends in the camp heard the contest and came up.

Springing up on his feet upon the bough where he had hitherto been sitting, and seizing another to support himself, Frank cut at the first Indian who approached with his sharp heavy weapon, and favoured by his position, in which no one could assail him in the rear, he cut him down, and would probably have held his ground against the overwhelming numbers, had not one of the foes climbed over him on the same bough, which he held with his left hand. This was too weak for the burden, cracked, and fell with a crash, bearing him with it through the branches.

But what had become of Tchuning all this while? Had he really been asleep, and was he still sleeping, as no shot was fired at the foe from his side? O, dear no!—the sharp eye of the Chinese had detected immediately, in the dusky form creeping below him, a very different enemy from the tiger he had awaited. When he saw the bushes lined on either side of him, and forms gliding through the grass everywhere, he crept cautiously and gently back to the top of his palm-tree, taking very good care not to give the slightest sign of his whereabouts by any movement, which would have irremediably delivered him into the hands of his enemies. What did he care for the danger of his neighbour, when his own carcass was in question? *He* might shout for help as long as he liked, but Tchuning did not stir, and only cast an angry glance up at the moonlight, which might

possibly betray him by the gleaming of his rifle-barrel.

When Frank, who had been stunned by the fall, regained his senses, he found himself lying bound under a tree, and not far from him crackled a huge fire, round which fifteen or twenty dusky forms were partly lying, partly cowering, apparently engaged in a most zealous consultation. At first he could not imagine where he was—whether all that surrounded him was real, or whether he was affected by some wild feverish dream, which raised the strangest, most extraordinary objects before his fancy. But when he had opened and closed his eyes several times, and rubbed his forehead against the root of the tree, on which he lay,—for he could not use his hands, and all that surrounded him remained stationary, he understood but too clearly that it was no dream, and that he was the prisoner of a tribe, who were now probably seriously consulting whether he should be roasted, or eaten as he was, with pepper and salt.

But with this certainty the love of life crossed his mind, and the fear of a probably speedy and torturing death: the cold perspiration stood on his brow, and he attempted, though as quietly as possible, yet with the exertion of all his strength, to free himself from his bonds, and escape the savages by flying to the forests, no matter whither.

His movements were, however, by no means so unobserved as he at first fancied, for a black fellow suddenly rose close to his feet, who had been lying concealed in the shade of the thick foilage, and now stooped over him, with his gleaming eyes fixed upon him. A sharply uttered yell interrupted at the next

moment the discussion round the fire, and the natives collected in a second round the captive.

Frank looked round the circle angrily, and tried in vain to rise; his bonds held him tightly to the root on which he lay, but his guard, at an exclamation from one of the Indians, probably the chieftain, drew his curved knife, and cut the bonds without a word. Then, however, taking the young white man by the hand, he led him slowly to the fire, and pointing to a log that had been rolled up, he made him a sign to sit down. A few minutes later the whole band was collected round him, and the chieftain, or, at any rate, the man who appeared to have the command on this expedition, ordered him to get up and answer several questions which he would address to him.

Frank obeyed the command, which he understood more through the added gesticulations than the words: the language, however, though resembling the Malay, had such a quantity of strange words which he was perfectly unacquainted with, that, although he understood, or fancied he understood, a stray remark, he was quite unable to comprehend the entire sense of the questions addressed to him, and consequently could give no satisfactory answer. In addition, it seemed more than probable that they were desirous to find out from him the position and strength of the strange encampment, which they had already discovered, either by means of the spies they are in the habit of sending out, or through the numerous signs in the surrounding forest. Of course, it was Frank's object to let them know as little as possible of their true position, or at least not to reveal anything which might be prejudicial to his unfortunate com-

rades, and he soon remarked that it would be best for him to boldly play the part of an ignoramus, and so at least make his present masters believe that he was not able to give them any satisfactory information.

In this he was perfectly successful, but they did not, for all that, give up tormenting him with questions ; and when he refused to make any reply, they fastened him again, without further ceremony, to the nearest tree, where he stood in the light of their fire, and commenced their former discussion with the greatest energy. They appeared, too, to have assumed a more decisive character, for twice individuals quitted the group, and came up to feel the ribs and shoulders of their prisoner.

Frank felt a cold shudder, for he could hardly doubt but that he was treated by the brown villains as a lamb ready for the slaughter ; and, in the agony of despair, he again tore at his bonds. In vain—the cord was tougher than his muscles ; it cut into his flesh, but he could not sever it ; and he at last fell, exhausted and bleeding, and even with a certain degree of desperate resignation, at the foot of the little tree.

He had lain thus for about half an hour, when there was a movement among the Sumatrans. It was evident that they had come to some decision, for they looked at their arms and collected in two bands, whose leaders made various arrangements and gave their orders. Frank at last could not entertain the slightest doubt but that the band intended to surprise his companions, and return with their prisoners and the booty to their native village.

The little encampment could not be far distant from

the spot where they now were, and although a slight hope cheered him on the departure of the Sumatrans, this was soon mingled with apprehension for the fate of his friends, who, in addition to being weakened by the absence of himself and Tchuning, would, in their foolish security, be buried in sleep at a moment when they ought to have their eyes wide open, to repulse the attack of their treacherous foe. But they must, at least, have heard him firing, and Pulo Pulo was not the man to let himself be so easily surprised.

But that the Malays intended something serious, he soon saw by the slight guard left with him. Only two men were left ; enough certainly to guard him, in his bondage, from escaping, while the remainder of the Sumatrans set out, in two different bands and in different directions : had the camp been any great distance off, they would surely have kept in the same direction at starting.

CHAPTER XXIII.

HOW THE SUMATRANS ATTACKED THE ENCAMPMENT,
AND THE RECEPTION THEY MET WITH.

Affairs in the garrison. Pulo Pulo shows himself to be a skilful general. Return of Tchuning. The attack. Progress of the engagement. The natives are repulsed, but return again to the charge.

THE little garrison, in the meanwhile, though apprehending no surprise, but not to neglect the requisite precautions, had set their regular watches for the night, swallowed their frugal meal of rice and fruits, with the fresh water of the river, and were just going to rest, when the first shot of the young German sounded clearly through the silence of the night.

"Baai—good!" growled Pulo Pulo, "he has hit him; but if the villains from the mountains are prowling about and hear the shot, we shall have them on our backs sooner than would be pleasant. It was nonsense to make such a row, and I wish we had not let the two 'strangers' go out. When white men and Chinese come together, the Malay must always pay for the rice. But, surely, that sounded like human voices?"

"Ah! ah! another shot!" cried Tji-kandi, now springing on his feet; "they must have hit him with the first shot, and finished him with the second. But now there's been enough banging. What a row the gunpowder makes in the mountains! It's still thundering away behind us—and then it's beginning again to

our left. They must hear it across the water. Halloo, what's that?"

Tji-kandi listened attentively; and Pulo Pulo, who had before heard, though indistinctly, the yell of the assailants, when the shot was fired so unexpectedly among them, now clearly distinguished the single shout of the white man for help, and in a second they had all seized their guns, and were prepared for an attack.

When all had grown quiet again, and no sound disturbed the almost death-like silence, Tji-kandi, who had drawn close to Pulo Pulo, said, shaking his head ominously,

"The young fellow has done a foolish trick: after the first shot he must have got down from his tree, and have fallen right in the clutches of the beast. We can go out and help Tehuning to bury the body. I wish I had gone with him."

"To leave us three all alone here?" said Pulo Pulo, seriously. "I fear, Tji-kandi, we shall never see either the white man or the long-tail again in the camp, for I am very much mistaken if the shots fired were aimed at a tiger. Did Tji-kandi hear the noise of the first shot?"

"The noise? I should think so; it rung through the mountains as if it was never going to leave off."

Pulo Pulo shook his head—he might have been mistaken, but, well acquainted as he was with the woods, the whole affair did not seem to him right, and he was well aware that excessive watchfulness could do them no harm, but might ward off great misfortune.

But as there was nothing stirring for nearly an hour, when not a bough cracked in the forest, and the foliage hung perfectly motionless on the trees, Pulo Pulo himself began to fancy that he had been too apprehensive, or that no immediate attack need be expected.

But why did the two hunters not return? It was very wrong that they had gone at all, and he was firmly determined not to allow such a thing again, as long as they were in such a hostile and dangerous territory. But not to exhaust their little garrison unnecessarily, he had just ordered his two subordinates, the remainder of his little force, to lie down again, and himself undertaken their duties, when he heard footsteps in the bush, and cocked his gun, though he expected no attack on this side, for a foe would have come up with greater secrecy, and would not have revealed his approach in such a careless fashion.

He was not to remain long in doubt as to the character of his visitor, for Tehuning (and it was no one else), who might probably fancy that he had missed the right road, or whom the surrounding silence rendered uncomfortable, soon uttered his well-known signal, and hastened his steps when he heard the welcome reply.

But what a state he was in! Scratched by thorns, which he had not noticed in his fear of missing his way and being surprised by the enemy, but had rushed wildly through; with torn clothes, without hat or gun, he now returned, and brought his friends the fearful announcement that their hiding-place was suspected, if not already discovered, and that the young

white man had been dragged off, whether dead or alive he was unable to say.

Concealed in the tuft of the tree, he stated, he had seen something crawling up to them, and on stooping over to distinguish the object and fire at it, he had, to his horror, noticed a number of human forms, who were cautiously approaching, as if fearing an ambuscade, and were sending out spies, to see whether the strangers, whose trail they had no doubt already found, had an idea of such a visit or not. The white man, in his opinion, must have taken the object he saw moving in the bushes for the expected tiger, and the greater distance at which he was from it rendered that probable; his shot had certainly hit the mark, for one body remained motionless in the grass, but what occurred afterwards he could not precisely state, as the contest had taken place in the opposite tree, and he had not dared to raise his head, when he heard the enemy so close to him, for fear of being discovered.

A shot had then been fired—a heavy body, and then another, had fallen from the branches of the tree; and when he at length cautiously raised his head to look down, he saw the enemy retiring in an opposite direction to the camp, with their prisoner in the centre of the band.

Such was his report; and there was little comfort in the idea that they were watched, perchance already surrounded, by a number of blood-thirsty Sumatrans, who needed only to cut them off from approaching the sea, if they did not dare an open attack, and then let them starve at their leisure, without the slightest risk for themselves.

Their little force now consisted of only five men—

the Chinese, Tji-kandi, Pulo Pulo, and the two Malays; but as they were excellently armed, and had the swivel securely mounted, they could have repulsed the attack of sixfold their number, had they not been cut off from all hope of escape, as the unfavourable nature of the coast would prevent any European ship from coming in, save for some special reasons. Supposing they repulsed the first attack of the foes, would they not bring up reinforcements, and could they hope to resist them for any length of time? And would not the fact of one of their little band being killed or wounded accelerate the destruction of the remainder?

And what had become of the young German? Tji-kandi shook his head sorrowfully when he thought of his fate, and reflected how soon they might all share it. The infamous tiger was to blame for the whole misfortune; and the fat little Malay really gnashed his teeth, when he reflected that the brute was now able to go about free and uninjured, while they were in the trap.

The principal question now was, how strong the band could be which Tehuning had seen; for only from that fact could it be calculated whether they would be satisfied with the carcase of one stranger, or through it acquire an appetite for more. Tehuning's information led them to apprehend the latter, for according to him they would be engaged with a large body of natives: Pulo Pulo, on the contrary, shook his head, and said, that the moonlight had probably deceived him, and six men in the bush could make a tremendous row, by breaking suddenly out of the thicket. But, for all that, the Malays determined on

not neglecting the slightest measure of precaution, during this night at least, and Pulo Pulo undertook the watch with another of his countrymen, which they intended to keep till daybreak, when there would not be much to fear, so long as the sun stood high in the heavens.

The remainder gladly devoted themselves to sleep : they required rest, especially Tehuning, who, exhausted by fear and the exertion of his march, lay at Pulo Pulo's feet, with his arms at his side, and slept so soundly, and even began to snore so loudly, that the Malay was forced to give him a succession of kicks to keep him quiet.

They had lain there about two hours, when Pulo Pulo heard something rustling in the bush ; and directly after the low whine of a panther—he knew it from childhood—reached his ear. The moon was now standing high in the heavens, and he could see plainly across the little open clearing, that lay between him and the camp. He clearly perceived in the bright light a movement in the bushes, and even fancied he saw the spotted skin of the animal. But aware of the proximity of the foe, he had not the slightest idea of firing at any savage animal, which could only arouse the sleepers, and betray to the watchful Sumatrans the exact position of the little camp. A feeling of uncertainty about what he had just seen and heard was aroused in him, and with painful interest he observed the nearest bushes, to see whether something or other would not justify his suspicion, but in vain. He could only hear the re-echoing steps of the beast in the fallen leaves, and the sound so closely resembled the real step of the panther, that the Malay at

last felt a species of security, as it was plain they had no enemy to fear in that direction, or else the beast would not have emerged from the bush so quietly.

Again, a long, long time passed; the Malay had grown sleepy, and had frequently raised his wearied eye to the southern cross, to see whether its course to the west did not announce the approach of day: every now and then he gave a start, and tried to dispel every feeling of exhaustion by increased forced watchfulness; but he could not stand this for long, and his wearied body would have eventually yielded to the silent, monotonous solitude that surrounded them, had he not heard the same whining cry on the other side, and starting up hurriedly, he saw that the Malay posted there was cautiously raising his gun, and thrusting it between two of the palisades. In a second he was all alive, and quickly gliding up to the other sentry, he ordered him not to fire, until he saw an enemy rushing at the palisade: in any other event, and by the slightest suspicious movement, he was to wake the others, as after the *first* shot, if an enemy was really close by, they would have to expect a general and terrible attack.

Then returning with equal rapidity to his former post, without letting his person be visible from without, he peered attentively through the crevices of the palisades; and at the same instant, while seeking his gun with one hand, with the other he shook the sleeping Chinese, and a couple of words, whispered in his ear, produced a magical effect—

“The enemy!” The fat fellow started up as if under the influence of an electric stroke; but Pulo Pulo’s hand was on his shoulder, and his menacingly raised

finger warned him to be cautious, and to wake the other sleepers as quickly as possible. The Malay's sharp eye again perceived a suspicious movement in the bushes; and while on the other side of the encampment the whining of the beast of prey, or the sound which bore such a striking resemblance to it, was repeated, the Javan felt perfectly convinced that the Sumatrans were only trying to attract the attention of the garrison to this side, while intending to make their attack on the other.

In the shadow of their *pahon haryè* they could set their men without risk of being watched by those outside, who did not dare to advance too far; and Pulo Pulo now pointed their swivel at the spot which the assailants would probably select for their first attack, as they could creep up to it without being detected.

Then taking his former position, the men remained thus in readiness for half an hour, without hearing the slightest sound, and the fearful state of excitement in which they were was growing unendurable, when Pulo Pulo discovered that one of the enemy was climbing up a tree, through the rustling of a neighbouring bough, with the probable intention of examining the interior of the encampment ere they made a general attack.

Pulo Pulo was not inclined to wait for this, and first going round to advise all of the imminent assault, he returned to his place and stood with his gun pointed at the tree, until he clearly distinguished a dark form in it, carefully bending back a bough, to have a better survey of the fort. At the next moment his rifle cracked, and with the rustling of the boughs which announced that he had hit his mark,

the yelling war-cry of the Sumatrans was heard, and dusky forms bounded over the little clearing, and hurled themselves frantically against the palisades.

Pulo Pulo, however, who had foreseen the designs of the enemy with tolerable accuracy, had thrown away his gun, and hurried to the swivel. He had just picked up the tally-api lying by it, when five or six heads became visible close together above the palisades, who were saluted the next moment by a deadly shower of bullets. The sound of the cannon echoed so furiously and unexpectedly through the silent forest, that the enemy retired in terror to their hiding-places, and Pulo gained time to load again.

But besides the swivel, the guns of the garrison had carried death into their ranks, at only a few paces distance. So unanticipated, too, had been the resistance, that the fugitives did not even carry off their dead with them—a very unusual circumstance. But this caused Pulo Pulo—and very justly—to expect a second attack, and his companions remained motionless behind their bulwarks, not to expose themselves unnecessarily to the ever watchful foe. This precaution had not been in vain, for the Sumatrans began to fire arrows from the thicket, at any spot where the flash of a gun revealed an enemy; and they were so well aimed, that they struck Tehuning in the ear, who had foolishly raised his head over the palisades to have a hasty look, and Tji-kandi in the arm, through the palisades. Fortunately they were not poisoned, or the garrison would have been lost, and the besiegers soon saw that such annoyance only rendered the besieged more cautious, without being able to do them any injury. But they had not yet

given up their attack, and after a short rest, in which Tji-kandi yielded to the quiet hopes that they had had a sickening, they rushed once again at the palisades, and not caring for the shot from the swivel, which killed two of their number, and was accompanied by a salvo from the small arms, five of them actually succeeded in surmounting the palisades, and attacked the besieged with khrises and war-clubs in their hands.

CHAPTER XXIV.

HOW FRANK MADE AN ATTEMPT TO ESCAPE ON HIS OWN HOOK, AND SUCCEEDED.

Frank by the fire. His thoughts and hopes. He takes his guard by surprise, and escapes. Frank carries off the native canoes and returns to the stockade. His presence there alters the state of things.

FRANK, in the meanwhile, lay bound under the tree, and gazed with gloomy despair into the glimmering ashes, on which his watchers now and then threw damp leaves, to keep up a dense smoke and drive off the persecuting mosquitoes. They seemed to pay but little attention to him, and only to be engaged in their sirih-chewing, and sending the red disgusting juice in every direction around them; but for all that, not one of his movements escaped them, and whenever he stirred, were it only to alter his position or to turn his head on one side, their dark eyes were fixed upon him and watched him anxiously, until he again lay quiet and motionless.

But if his watchers annoyed him no further, the mosquitoes did so all the more, as they buzzed round him in swarms, and were only partially dispersed by the smoke that passed away above his head. Frank made every possible attempt to escape their painful stings, but he could only procure a few minutes' peace by rolling over and over; the little tormentors rushed again and again upon him with indefatigable zeal.

The two Sumatrans—of whom one appeared to be a chieftain, for his dress was of the finest stuff, his turban embroidered with gold, and in his belt he wore a really magnificent khris, richly set with precious stones—were in the meanwhile carrying on an animated conversation, of which Frank understood so much, by means of his knowledge of Malay, as to discover that they were talking about a boat, which lay on the beach opposite to them, which one wanted to look after while the other guarded the prisoner. At last they agreed that one of them should go down to it, but that the old chieftain—a muscular, broad-shouldered fellow—should remain with the prisoner.

But Frank was not much helped by this; for, with arms bound and an armed guard, it would have been madness to think of flight, had he not felt for a short time past that his bonds had become looser, probably through his rolling from one side to the other, and gave him a prospect of liberating his hands. The new flash of hope crossed his mind, but at the same time, perfectly conscious that the slightest precipitate movement would entail the most ruinous consequences, he determined on pretending to be asleep until one of his watchers had left; when only guarded by two eyes, a favourable opportunity might

perhaps offer, which, brought up as he had been in a good school, he made up his mind not to let slip.

His now quiet and motionless posture, which cost him no little self-command, owing to the furious musquito stings, gained him this advantage that his watchers were not induced to look after his bonds; and after a while, one of them fastened his headcloth tighter, drew his sarong round him, and quitted the spot, only armed with his khris, while Frank took advantage of a favourable moment to calculate by the position of the stars the exact direction in which he had gone.

The other remained standing for some time near the smoking fire, then walked up to the prisoner, who drew his breath slowly and regularly, as if asleep, and laid himself on the ground close to him, with his face turned towards him. His khris, which, like all the natives, he wore on the left side, though far back, probably pressed against him, or else he was afraid of injuring it, for he drew it, together with the sheath, from his belt, laid it under his head, and seemed inclined to await the return of his comrade in this manner. Under such circumstances, Frank did not dare to make any attempt at flight.

The musquitoes thirsted more and more for their blood, and the Sumatran, whom they stung furiously, at length jumped up with a gently muttered curse, and collected a quantity of wet leaves in order to increase the smoke.

But as soon as he had turned his back, the prisoner made renewed attempts to free his hands, and could scarcely suppress a cry of joy when they yielded to

his exertions, and he was enabled to draw his right hand out of the cord. At the same moment, the noise of the swivel fired by Pulo Pulo thundered through the forest, and the Sumatran started with alarm at the terrific sound.

A more favourable moment would never occur for the prisoner, and his first movement was towards the khris that lay near him. Fortunately placed, a dense mass of smoke covered him from view ; and hurriedly drawing the khris from the sheath, which he placed in his belt, to cut his way in case of need, he bounded into the thicket, where he needed not fear pursuit.

The Sumatran had not so entirely taken his attention off Frank, for he scarce sprang up when the savage turned toward him. But the smoke hid every object from his sight, and filled his eyes with water in the bargain : still, firmly determined in preventing the escape of his prisoner by all the means at his command, he was jumping out of the smoke, when the young man rushed upon him with his full weight, and hurled him to the ground. But he had found time to seize the clothes of the runaway in his iron grasp, and dragged him down with him ; and the latter would hardly have escaped, had he not in his desperation driven his weapon into the side of the savage, who loosed his hold with a loud yell, and held his hand on the deadly wound.

Frank was free, and withdrawing from the clutches of the Sumatran, he followed at headlong speed the direction which he had seen his other watcher go previously. But when once in the forest, and exposed to no further pursuit, he checked his rapid course, listened attentively that he might not foolishly fall

into the hands of the remaining savage, and soon had the delight of emerging from the forest, and seeing the moon reflected in the mirror-like surface of the bay that lay stretching out at his feet.

He was still standing beneath the shade of the outermost bushes, which begirded a broad strip of sandy beach, when he saw something moving at the water's edge, and on stooping down, scarcely daring to draw breath as he did so, he noticed a dusky form coming up from the sea, which stopped scarcely ten paces from him to listen, and then disappeared with hurried steps in the thicket. The Sumatran passed so close to the fugitive, that he could almost have touched him with his hand; but not having an idea of what had occurred during his absence, he now hurried back to join his comrade, to consult with him about the probable cause of the fearful crash, and, perhaps, whether it would not be better to get rid of their prisoner by a couple of stabs and then rejoin their friends.

But whatever his plans might have been, he was destined to find himself bitterly deceived, for his captive was free, and had even discovered their boats, to which he went down with a beating heart, as soon as the savage had quitted the beach.

Eight canoes lay here close together, bound with strong ropes to a little mangrove-bush that bowed down to the water's edge. Each of them was large enough to carry eight men, although it was not likely so many had landed here, and that some of them were intended to remove the booty. But the smallest number of men each would require, to be properly managed, was three; and some of them had probably

brought more, so that the whole band would consist of between twenty and thirty natives.

But what to do now?—take one of the canoes and go to sea in it? What would become of his unhappy comrades in the meanwhile, and how could Frank hope, with only one oar, to escape his pursuers? At the same time, he could not take long to decide, for before long the natives on finding him escaped and his own comrade murdered, could return and drive him back into the forest.

There appeared to be another difficulty in the current, which, at the now rising flood-tide, ran with extraordinary speed and force: the canoes were dragging furiously at the cords, and how would he be able to make his way through this current? He still stood tortured by the painful uncertainty as to what he should do, when the second shot thundered through the forest, and to his joyful surprise he discovered that the current, which he had till then fancied was opposed to him, would bear him direct, and with the speed of an arrow, to the spot where their little fort must be situated, judging from the sound of the shot. Once there, he did not doubt but that he could reach it unperceived, as he only required to follow the narrow mountain stream upwards; and with this determination he jumped into one of the largest canoes lying there, in order to be able to use it eventually for their common escape.

And if the natives were to come upon his track and follow in the other canoes?—Why, hang it, instead of cutting only one away, he might as well let them all drift; and hurriedly executing his scheme, he threw the oars, except six which he kept in his own boat,

overboard, and had the pleasure of seeing them drift away at a great speed; then drawing his khris, he cut through the rope which had held the little flotilla. At the next instant the canoes glided away from the bank, and then, seizing his paddles, he guided his own canoe towards the shore, in whose dark shadow he fancied himself more secure, keeping exactly the direction from which the sound had come, and whence he again heard the discharge of small arms, as if pointing out his track. The other canoes he left to their fate and to the current.

What scarcely six men could have effected at ebb-tide with the greatest exertion, labouring against the stream, he now effected like child's play with its assistance. Like an arrow, the sharply-cut canoe glided along the coast, within whose shade he soon recognised the stream that supplied water to their encampment, while it required some exertion to turn the little bark into it. In this he succeeded, however, and the noise of the still raging contest did not suffer him to be long doubtful as to his course; so seizing one of the narrow, sharp-edged paddles as offensive and defensive weapon, he sprang up the bank with hasty steps.

CHAPTER XXV.

HOW THE BESIEGED KEPT THE FIELD, BUT WERE
FORCED TO QUIT IT.

Departure from Sumatra. Death of the Chinaman. They are picked up by an American ship. Frank sets sail for America.

WE left the little garrison at the moment when the enemy were leaping over the palisades at two different points, and fancied that they had gained the victory thereby ; but the besieged were well aware that, if conquered, they would be infallibly lost ; and as they were well provided with arms, for each of them had a second gun lying by their side, they threw themselves boldly on their approaching foe, who found themselves so unexpectedly saluted and driven back by their fire-arms. Three of the five fell before their bullets ; the third was levelled by the butt-end of Pulo Pulo's musket, just as he was trying to pierce him with his spear ; and the fifth escaped with difficulty the stabs of the two Malays. But others followed after, for the garrison, engaged with an internal foe, had not time to guard the palisades, and Pulo Pulo found himself suddenly attacked by two other warriors, who had sprang over the palisades, while a third was raising himself over the sharp breastwork behind him, and was just jumping over with the khris between his teeth, when a blow from without struck him on the forehead. The khris slipped from his teeth and fell into the encampment, while the senseless

body of the warrior followed it, and a loud, cheery hurrah—the war-ery of the Europeans, with which the inhabitants of the coast were only too familiar—filled the hearts of the foe with a panic terror, and gave the besieged fresh hopes.

It was Frank, who arrived just at the right time, with the sharp paddle in his hand, to give the battle a most healthy change; for the Sumatrans, deceived by the strange shout, and fearing a new foe when they had their hands already full with the old one, sought to escape in every direction, lest they might be surrounded and cut to pieces. Pulo Pulo was at first surprised, and really believed, with the enemy, that a new reinforcement had come to his assistance by some wondrous interposition. He had not thought of the young German, whom he imagined dead long before.

Frank, however, who clearly saw that they only owed their temporary rescue to the surprise of the moment, and that they would be hardly able to resist a second attack, which they might confidently expect, collected the little band, who were busily engaged in reloading their guns beneath the tree, told them that he had a canoe lying at the mouth of the stream, and begged them to follow him to it as quickly as possible, with all they could carry.

But whither? No matter, only away from this coast, where, when once discovered, they could not escape death or slavery. Worse could not occur to them out at sea; and now the wondrously-acquired canoe offered them at least a prospect of safety.

Besides, they had several wounded: Tehuning had a lance thrust through his shoulder, one of the Malays a khris wound in the arm and the side, and both felt

themselves so exhausted, that, when the first excitement of the contest was passed, the Chinese fainted, and the Malay also laid himself under the tree, through the pain his wound caused him.

There was, consequently, no time to lose; and if the Sumatrans had ventured to renew the attack just then, the little band could not have withstood them. Pulo Pulo soon formed his determination; pulling up the palisades on one side, to have a free passage, he seized the senseless Chinese, and followed the young European, who had loaded himself with as many cocoa-nuts as he could carry, to the fortunately not far distant canoe; the Malay was supported by the other, and Tji-kandi formed the rear, with a basket full of juicy fruits. The wounded once on board, they all returned quickly and quietly to the camp, to lay in a few provisions and arms; but they only collected in their nervous haste what lay close to hand. Threatened by a savage foe, they did not know whether they might not be attacked again at any moment, and their last chance of flight cut off. Once in the boat and out in the open bay, carried by the current, that set to the north, further and further from their foes, they felt themselves saved, and paddled out slowly and regularly to sea, where they could only hope to meet with a ship, which would save them from the dangers that had impended over them for days.

And they did not allow themselves a moment's rest, for dawn was already breaking in the east; and if they were discovered from the shore, they still ran the risk of being pursued and captured by their embittered enemies. But when the sun at length rose over the glittering surface of the sea, and the land lay at a

considerable distance in their rear, and not a single boat was visible on the shore, they breathed freely once again, and the danger which they still ran of having their heavily-laden boat swamped by a wave—even the possibility of falling into the hands of some other pirates—appeared to them, when compared with the certain death they had escaped the previous night, much too insignificant to fill their hearts with apprehension or anxiety.

But there was one on board whom the fresh air and the sunlit sky would not long benefit. Tchuning, the Chinese, after recovering, and at first possessing sufficient strength and consciousness to take his place in the bows, and so not impede the rowers, had grown worse and worse, and Tji-kandi, who possessed some acquaintance with the pathology of wounds, shook his head seriously, and asserted that the point of the spear had been poisoned. At the same time the sun began to burn hotter and hotter over their heads, the wounded man talked incoherently, and threw himself about once or twice with such violence that he nearly upset the little boat; but his strength soon gave way, and an hour later he could no longer raise his arms, or even his head. Frank stooped down over him, to pour some cocoa-milk into his mouth, but though his lips burned feverishly, he could not swallow the refreshing draught.

For a long while he lay there motionless and silent, and only the gentle rattling of his lips showed that he still breathed. His shoulders were terribly swollen and his face suffused with blood: all at once it seemed as if he had regained consciousness—he attempted to raise himself, and his glance flew timidly from one to

the other, and then over the unruffled surface of the sea; but it was only for a moment—the last struggle of life with death—and when he fell back on his bed, he stretched himself, and fixed his glassy eyes on the azure vault of heaven, which smiled above him for the last time with its sunny light—he was dead.

The little company sat silent and sorrowful, with their paddles drawn in—one had again departed from among them, and death seemed to demand victim after victim, in slow but certain succession. The Malay, too, had grown very ill, and in gloomy silence the men sat, thinking it might not be long ere the clear sea covered them all. They did not, however, dare to sit thinking for long, when the moment demanded deeds.

“Throw the corpse overboard!” Pulo Pulo said, in a low voice, which all heard, however: “we have nothing to bind on his feet. May Allah grant him peace! Over with him.”

Tji-kandi and Frank, to whom this was addressed, silently raised the body on the gunwale of the boat, and the Malay held it there a moment, to mutter a whispered prayer: the heart of the young European was also ready to burst, and his eye was fixed in fervent prayer on the blue, bright sky. A Christian and a Mohammedan were praying for the soul of their Pagan comrade, and neither of them thought that God could make a distinction between them. Misfortune brings us more closely together: when far away in a strange world, surrounded by the wonders of the Almighty, we only think of the all-loving God above, and it does not occur to us that He can make a difference between His children because one bows to

the east, the other to the west, in praying to Him -- for they are all His children.

After the short prayer was ended, the two lowered the body slowly into the water: but they did not look after it again -- they had no weight to fasten to its feet, and they knew that it would rise again to the surface, a certain and welcome prey for the fishes. Pulo Pulo also lifted his paddle from the water, and bowed his head, as the canoe slowly moved past the body; but then, setting to work lustily, the four men worked with all their strength to leave the corpse behind.

But with this it seemed that their troubles were to terminate, for a favouring star henceforth presided over their destiny. Following their track in perfectly calm weather out to sea, they paddled incessantly, in spite of the heat, till evening, when Pulo Pulo suddenly sprang up, and with a shout of joy announced a sail. He was not mistaken; at a great distance from them still, but, as could be clearly distinguished, holding a direct course towards them, the high masts of an European or American ship gradually rose, but the wind died almost entirely away, and the night fell upon them ere they had drawn near enough to see the hull from their canoe, and consequently they could not hope to be seen from it. Directly after sunset, the breeze freshened, however, and Pulo Pulo took one of the still unused paddles, broke it in pieces, and sharpening one end, he began rubbing it quickly against the other, while throwing his whole weight upon it. In a few minutes a light smoke rose, and the rubbed portion of the wood grew black, and some ten minutes after, the fine sawdust produced by the

friction caught fire. A piece of cocoa matting, which the Malay wore for a waist-belt, was soon kindled from it, and it was an easy task to produce a bright flame with some finely shred wood.

This fire they cautiously kept up, until they clearly saw the outline of the whole vessel on the bright horizon, and then they fed the flame, till it burnt up firmly with pieces of wood cut off another paddle, as well as one of their spear-handles. At the same time, they joined their voices in one loud shout, and fired their guns several times, although the wind blew from the vessel, and they could scarcely hope to be heard.

But the fire had been seen—one of the people on board, who had mounted the shrouds to bring down some linen hung up there to dry, had seen the illumination and told the captain of it. He did not put much faith in it at first—they might be hostile prahus, which with their long guns had often proved dangerous to even larger vessels, and were off to get more sea-room; but the rising moon illumined the water sufficiently to let them see the single boat, then at so short a distance from them, and on drawing nearer, they also heard the shots and shouts.

The bows now fell off the wind, straight in the direction of the light, flashing over the sea: on the bowsprit a sailor was stationed, to call out to the helmsman, when they had run near enough, or if he noticed anything suspicious. To leewards several of the crew were posted, to throw a rope as they passed to the boat, or raft, or whatever it might be, and when they came up to them the captain backed his foresail.

The line flew out, and was seized and held firmly by the arms joyfully held out to them; a few minutes later the little boat lay on the lee of the ship, one of the lines was fastened round the body of the wounded Malay, to lift him on board, and when Pulo Pulo had handed the last things out of the canoe to one of the sailors, he loosened the rope and climbed on board. When the yards again flew round, and the sails filled, the canoe remained behind in the vessel's track, and only the fire still burning in its bow, and which had set on fire the thwarts, gleamed like a pale star floating on the water, till it also disappeared in the darkness and mist.

CHAPTER XXVI.

HOW FRANK RETURNED HOME, AND WAS CURED OF
HIS LONGING IN A MOST UNPLEASANT WAY.

Frank says good-bye to Tji-kandi. Arrival in Boston. The chieftain's khris. Frank makes a good bargain. He revisits his home. Sad changes. His Helen has disappeared. Frank turns planter.

THE ship, which came from Singapore and was homeward bound, was an American brig, with a cargo for Boston, and the skipper kindly offered to take the little band, whose adventures Frank had described to him, to that city. The Malays, however, earnestly desired to be landed in one of the English or Dutch Indian ports, in order to return to their homes, and Captain

Slocum promised to run in to Pulo Penang, an English settlement, and land them there; with the next monsoon they would have opportunities every week to return to Java, without being exposed to any other danger than that of the wind and waves.

Frank had given up his design of remaining in India; the homeward-bound ship, which would put into port only a few miles from the spot where he had spent the greater portion of his youth, and where friends very dear to him still resided, awakened all his old sweet reminiscences; and though the golden dreams, with which he had set forth in the land of the rising sun had not been realized, and he returned to his home as poor as when he left it, and only rich in experience through the wild adventures he had witnessed; still he brought back his strong, sound limbs, and with those, he knew well, he could everywhere establish his own home.

A few days later the brig reached the island of Penang, opposite the coast of Malacca, and Frank took a cordial farewell of his old companions, of whom Tji-kandi could scarce part with him. The fat Malay, indeed, hesitated a long while, whether he should not go with his young friend to his cold northern home, and live with him there; but the thought of his own bamboo hut, embowered in palms and pisang, possibly dispelled every idea of this nature, for when the others were seated in the boat, and he still stood on deck undecided, and holding the young man's hand tightly clasped, he suddenly began shaking his head, and then glided down the rope into the boat, as if he

were afraid of being left behind, or were not quite certain whether he should not remain there of his own accord.

An hour later the boat returned aboard, every sail was set, and the ship cleft its rapid way through the waters.

The voyage was performed safely and without any further adventures : the brig was a good sailer, and in spite of rather a violent storm at the Cape, which compelled them to lay to for three days under closely reefed sail, they doubled it safely, and after a voyage of 110 days reached Cape Cod, and cast anchor for the first time again off Boston, in American waters.

Frank was in the unpleasant position of being forced to land on the broad continent of America without a halfpenny ; the only thing he had brought back with him was the khris belonging to the Sumatran chieftain, whose hilt was richly gilded and appeared very heavy, and was in addition set with handsome stones. The American captain had told him the weapon was much more valuable than he imagined, for the Indian chieftains frequently expended enormous sums on these weapons, which were made heirlooms, and remained in possession of the family at any cost ; but Frank was unwilling to part with it, for he hoped to be soon able to earn a few dollars by the labour of his hands.

For all that, on arriving at Boston, he went to a jeweller's, to inquire after its probable value. He had fancied the man would estimate it at ten or fifteen dollars, but scarcely believed his ears, when the jeweller, after a long and careful examination, offered

him 1,500 dollars for it, and when he attempted to leave the shop in utter amazement, advanced to 2,000, 2,500, and finally to 3,000 dollars.

Frank had, however, been too much about among strangers for the last years to be easily taken in, and convinced that the khris, if the first jeweller offered him such an enormous sum for it, must certainly be worth still more, he decided on not accepting, just at present, the money, which, with his modest ideas, would make him a rich man, but on first making careful inquiries as to how much he might expect fairly for the gold and the coloured stones. He did not exactly understand in what the enormous value of such ornaments consisted.

For this purpose he now walked into the main street of the city, and into one of the largest jeweller's shops he could find there. There were purchasers in the shop, and the young fellow, shabbily dressed in sailor's clothes, had no attention paid him: the ladies were selecting some ornaments, and could not decide what to have, until the old gentleman who accompanied them—for the jeweller took no notice of him—turned kindly to him and asked what he might want, as he appeared to be tired of waiting.

Frank, who felt grateful for this polite address, took the khris from his belt, and showing it to the old gentleman, told him that he had come to inquire its precise value.

The stranger's exclamation of surprise, when he saw the valuable jewelled weapon, soon brought the jeweller to his side, and in admiration they regarded the splendid work, as well as the rich glittering stones with which the hilt was thoroughly covered.

Frank was obliged to give them a full account of how he had become possessed of it, and where he came from, and the young fellow's bright, open eye, as well as his sun-burnt skin, were a guarantee that he spoke the truth.

Frank soon found that he had done well in refusing the first offer made him, for the present jeweller, a Frenchman and excellent judge of precious stones, valued the value of the weapon, in diamonds and jewels alone, at 11,000 dollars, which the old gentleman offered to pay him in cash, if he would remain a couple of days in the city, and did not receive a better offer. At the same time he invited him to come and stay at his house, and advanced him some money to dress him respectably.

It can be conceived how gladly the young man accepted such a friendly offer: he remained a fortnight in his house, and was treated quite like a member of the family; so much did they love the young, honest lad, who had experienced such extraordinary adventures, and described them so plainly and modestly. But he could not bear to remain any longer, for his heart drew him westwards, to the lovely banks of the Hudson. Then, he could purchase land, establish a farm, and eventually—ah! his heart bounded, when he thought of the Wolframs and his little friend Helen, but he really did not know what plans passed through his mind. Helen must have grown very tall and pretty—and old Wolfram? Frank blushed for the old man, when he thought of the evening when Wolfram had stolen the old man's treasure, and had thus driven him out into the wide, wide world; but he felt no anger, no disgust against him—all was past

and gone, and old Wolfram was at any rate Helen's father.

The old gentleman bought the khris of him, and Frank deposited the money by his advice in Boston, until he had some good purpose to put it to, and then need only call it in. But although he felt grieved to part from the worthy man, he was glad to quit the large city, so strange to him. He longed to see the woods once again around him, and the train which bore him homewards travelled almost too slowly for him.

On the next morning, he set out from Albany on board the steamer for the little town of Hudson, and then walked hurriedly towards the little colony, without making himself known to any of his former friends, or even asking how those fared to whom he was so much attached. Ah! he still knew every road and lane, every stone in the path, every overhanging branch. But the bushes had grown taller, new houses and farms had been built, a few trees he had loved had been felled; the small stream, on which such beautiful flowers once grew, was stopped up, and covered with beams and dust, for an enterprising settler intended to build a mill over it; and when he at last reached the old well-known stile, where he had played as a child, and had afterwards himself cut the birch poles, which served as a balustrade to the rough-hewn board thrown across, he found—and the tears stood in his eyes, when he discovered the *improvement*—an elegantly formed, painted bridge over the noisy stream, and the large moss-covered stone, which had formerly held the upper end of the plank, stripped of its covering, and now painted white, in order that

persons might avoid it at night, and not stumble over it.

He had now reached the spot where his grandfather's house had stood—stood?—They had left the spot still there, but instead of the dark grey shingle roof, which had formerly been embowered among tall chestnut and hickory trees, he now found a gaily painted brick building, with a bright red tiled roof, and the trees around had been cut down, to make room for a young, but still very seedy-looking orchard.

Frank turned away—he could not again enter the house, for it summoned up too sorrowful reminiscences—towards Wolfram's farm. But even the bushes, which had formerly stood between the two farms, and where the old man had buried his money, were now rooted up and the ground fenced in—the few years had effected an extraordinary change in the little colony, and Frank could not recognise the spot.

Trembling with nervousness and excitement, he walked along a broad path, which *must* lead to Wolfram's farm. There still stood the small house—his heart bounded joyfully—the same he had so often and so gladly entered. God be praised, that spot at least had not been affected by all these changes, and the Wolframs?—But behind he saw a large new building—had *he* built so fine a house to live in, and made all these improvements? A few minutes must procure him certainty on all these subjects, and he ran rather than walked along the pathway. Now he had reached the cottage, but the door was closed, which he had always before found open; his hand was on the hasp, but he did not dare to open—ha! what was that?—a horse was whinnying within.

"Halloo, young sir, and who do you want?" a voice shouted at this moment; and turning round hurriedly, he saw a mulatto in an ostler's jacket and a little red cap on his head, coming up to him.

"I'm looking for Mr. Wolfram's family," said Frank, in surprise, to the new comer.

"In the stable?" laughed the mulatto; "you'll hardly find him there."

"A stable?" Frank shouted in amazement, and the yellow fellow opened the door to him with a broad grin.

"Then perhaps they live in that house?" he said, after a short pause, with new hope. "Mr. Wolfram has perhaps become a rich man, and has "

The yellow one shook his head, and said, as he closed the door again:

"If the person's name was Wolfram who formerly held this farm, he's gone to Louisiana; the present owner of this place is Mr. Morton, from Tennessee - we came here about thirteen months back."

And as if he had said enough, and wished to break off any further conversation, he shoved his hands in his pockets, and walked whistling towards the large house, which was, probably, the family residence. But Frank turned away mournfully, and walked slowly back to the village, without looking after a single one of his old acquaintances; all was so fearfully changed in comparatively so short a time, that he had not the heart to ask after any one else, and he was only recognised by a few, and heartily welcomed in Hudson.

But what he had heard from the mulatto was confirmed here. Wolfram, who had suddenly obtained a sum of ready money, no one knew how, seemed to

have been so tormented by the curiosity of his neighbours, that he sold his little farm, and took ship at Boston for New Orleans, where he, it was said, intended to buy a cotton and sugar plantation. No one knew anything more about him.

And should Frank remain here, where all, all was strange to him? The plans he had formerly formed, how he would buy a farm here and establish his home, appeared to him now not exactly suitable. He was still too young, and the northern country, when stripped of the back ground with which he had invested it, did not appear to him so pleasant as he had fancied, when he thought of the tropical lands he had visited. At least, he said thus much in his own excuse; and when he told his friends in Hudson that he intended to return to Boston and regulate his money matters, he was firmly determined to take advantage of the first ship, and also go to New Orleans. It was possible that he might find Wolfram's trail, and the old man could give him the best advice how to lay out his money.

Old Wolfram? No, he felt a horror of the man, and yet he longed to see his family, he could scarcely explain why. He would not confess to himself even, that the magnet of attraction, was Helen, whose childish pure heart, and sweet temper, had so frequently consoled the lad, when sorrow and despair weighed him down. She was in truth the only being that had taken an interest in him; who had loved and consoled him, a poor orphan, like a faithful sister; and he who knows the misery and desolateness of standing alone in the wide world, and having no one—no one who rejoices when we come, or feels sorrow when we

depart—he will find it easily explicable, that the stranger no longer cared for the place which he once called his home, and that he longed to be far away from it, seeking for a more friendly abode.

In Boston he only remained a single day on this occasion, for a schooner sailed the very next morning for New Orleans, in which he immediately took his passage. The voyage was rapidly and safely accomplished; but Frank Wildman soon found himself as desolate in the “Queen City of the South,” as the magnificent New Orleans is called by the Americans, as he had recently been in Hudson. Though he found traces of the Wolframs, he found nothing more, and every attempt to discover them anywhere in the immense state was fruitless. They had certainly landed at New Orleans, but had then gone up the river in one of the Mississippi steamers, and, according to some, settled below *Bâton Rouge*, a small town on the Mississippi; according to others, at False River, or *Fausse Rivière*, in the vicinity of the settlement of *Pointe Coupée*; but Frank could not find the exact spot, and after wandering to no purpose about that neighbourhood, which pleased him excessively, he finally determined on remaining there, and eventually settling on the majestic river, which has such a magical charm over all who have once visited it.

CHAPTER XXVII.

IN WHICH FRANK MEETS WITH A NUMBER OF OLD
ACQUAINTANCES AND NEW ADVENTURES.

An interval of five years. Frank has become a land owner. Bayou Sarah. The hotel. Two strange ladies. Frank makes a discovery. He overhears a conversation. The plan for the robbery. The supper table. Frank recognises an old friend.

THE reader must now kindly imagine five years past, during which Frank went through a regular course of apprenticeship in the life of the southern plantations on the Atchafalaya—a species of premature passage of the Mississippi into the Gulf of Mexico— and prepared himself famously for managing an estate of his own. Money alone does not qualify us to fill any post ; we must first acquire the knowledge, in whatever rank of life it be. Unless a landlord is willing to trust to his people, inspectors and overseers, into whose hands he is delivered, whether they deal honestly by him or gradually ruin his estates, he must understand affairs thoroughly ; for this purpose serve from the pike upwards, and understand even the most trivial matters thoroughly ; afterwards he can say that he stands independent in the world, and can occupy the situation into which circumstances or his own free will have brought him. The artisan must first have been an apprentice—the skipper, boy and sailor—and any one who passes over these first steps as unnecessary must

not unfrequently turn back and begin again in his old days, or pay bitterly for his neglect.

Frank had been clever enough not to tell a soul that he had money at his disposal, and wished to purchase a plantation of his own: one after the other would have been recommended to him, and he would never have known certainly whether people meant honestly by him, or only wished to get rid of their land at a high price. Thus it came about, that in five years he could take advantage of an opportunity, when a planter was forced to sell his plantation, situated between the Atchafalaya and the confluence of the False River with the Mississippi, which Frank knew to be valuable, and on the very next day he found himself entire owner of a large, though very neglected sugar plantation, which he managed himself, and which after the first year promised to repay him the whole fortune which the former owner had dissipated by riotous living and utter neglect of his duties.

It was the turn of the second year since Frank had undertaken the management of his own plantation, when he returned one day from a business journey, which had taken him to Bayou Sarah, a little town just opposite Point Coupée, and determined to pass the night at the ferry hotel in the latter town, to await a mercantile friend who was going to arrive that evening with the mail steamer from New Orleans.

In the hotel he found everybody much busied: two ladies had arrived from the interior of the country, from one of the bayons that pours into the Red River, accompanied by a negro and a mulatto woman, to go down to New Orleans with the morrow's mail steamer. The hotel people appeared to know them, and spoke a

great deal about the wealth of the old widow, who was about to quit Louisiana and return to one of the northern states.

Frank sat at table making up for his lost dinner, with his back turned toward the door, and paid little attention to the conversation, which possessed no interest for him, but could not help hearing every word which some persons who had just entered said, as they stood at a window to see the lady pass by.

"Not so rich, sir?" said the bar-keeper, a young creole, to a remark made by one of the strangers; "not so rich? I can assure you, the old gentleman had a tidy sum of money when he came to Louisiana some eight years back; then he bought Du Plessi's estate on False River, which he sold again two years after, and the Lord knows how many thousand dollars he made by the bargain. Besides that, he drove a trade in niggers, without his wife, who couldn't bear such a thing, knowing anything about it, which brought them in almost a fortune every week; and, with the three plantations which he afterwards bought on the Bayou Opelousa, and which his widow has again sold to a French company for good Louisiana bank-notes, she must have nearly half a million in the little box which the nigger always carries at their heels. Not rich!" the young fellow then added, as if talking to himself, and in a tone of supreme contempt: "I only wish I was heir to old Wolfram, I'd tell whether I was rich or not."

"Wolfram?" Frank laid down knife and fork, and looked after the talkative creole, whom he called to him; but the latter saw and heard nothing, for he was so jealous about the denied wealth of the "demi

millionaire," that Frank was compelled to tap his glass with his knife.

Just as the miller starts up when his mill-wheel stops—just as the hunter of the western woods is not aroused by the loudest clap of thunder, but hears the crawling step of the wolf in the dry leaves—so the sound of metal and glass affects the body of a waiter; and if, through any sudden excitement, he can neither see nor hear anything else, that recalls him instantaneously to his duties.

"Waiter!" Wildman said to the rapidly approaching ministering spirit, "what Wolfram's that?"

"From New York, sir."

"State or city?"

"Sir?"

"Does he come from the state or city of New York?"

"I only know a city, sir."

"Ah—yes: can you give me the Christian names of these ladies?"

"Certainly, sir,—directly; nothing is easier than that—they are on their boxes: the young lady's name is Helen; but the old lady——"

Frank felt that the blood rushed to his temples, and he sprang up that the creole might not see him blush.

So, then, old Wolfram was dead! His first feeling was to rush to the ladies' room and greet them as old friends: but on the way, the fear affected him that they were now rich, very rich, and might receive him politely, but not cordially,—and that was the last hope left him from his childhood; why should he risk its destruction?

Then it occurred to him that he had altered so greatly in the last years, that he need hardly fear being recognised by people to whom he had, after all, been always a stranger; and he determined to converse with them the next morning, or perhaps that evening at supper, and gradually bring the conversation to their former residence on the Hudson. Perhaps they would remember him kindly, and then there would be plenty of time to make himself known, and to say, -- "The light-haired, blue-eyed, delicate lad, who quitted the north a poor orphan, has grown into the dark-haired, bearded, and powerful man; but his heart has ever remained the same, and he has never forgotten you for a moment through all that long and sorrowful time;" and if they did not remember him, why, then he would take a polite farewell of them in the morning, just as we do with strangers whom we meet on a journey: whatever his own feelings might be in that case, the "strangers" should never become acquainted with them.

With this determination he walked into the garden, partly to distract his thoughts, partly to await the arrival of the post-boat, which was speedily expected.

A lofty China tree stood in front of the ferry hotel, in which a former owner had formed a seat, and built a narrow flight of stairs up to it. Close below it ran the garden hedge, and the thickly-leaved and flower-covered branches formed such an impenetrable wall on the side where the road ran along the Mississippi, that no one could be seen thence in the tree, nor would suppose any one to be there, unless acquainted with the stairs concealed in the bushes.

The young man climbed into this tree, for it

afforded a prospect down the stream, of a spot which the steamer must pass. But the mail-boat arrived very late on this day, and the twilight set in; even the fireflies began to glisten among the flowers, and Wildman was still seated in the tree, listening to the gentle murmur of the river that ran close at his feet, and the rustling of the leaves.

Gently whispering voices beneath him recalled him to his senses, and he rose slowly to descend the steps, and return to the hotel, in which the first supper bell had been already rung, when the voice of one of the speakers below made him start, and in listening to it, he overheard what it said. "Half a million--nonsense!" growled one of the men below, and Frank struck his forehead, as he strove to recall this voice, which summoned up deep, long past, and almost forgotten scenes. Where had he heard it before, and why did the sound make him tremble involuntarily?

"And I tell you it's true," replied the other speaker, in whom Frank fancied he recognised the guest who had been talking with the waiter; "in the chest, which the nigger lugs after his mistress, are the bank notes, and to-morrow morning, with the steamer, the booty will escape us. Such a chance occurs only once in life, and it will make our fortunes."

"Hang it all!" said the other, in a gentle, half-suppressed voice, and Frank could have sworn it belonged to an old acquaintance; "if that's the case, I'd be the last to say 'no' to such a plan. Who sleeps at night in the house?"

"No one, whom we can't manage with our crew," was the satisfactory reply. "The niggers all live in

the out-houses, and needn't know anything of the whole affair till morning. We can convince ourselves, however; come to supper with me, and afterwards you can——”

A door opened at this moment in the house, and people came up the road; the two men, therefore, hurriedly entered the garden gate, and Wildman could no longer understand the whispered words they exchanged. But with the consciousness that some danger menaced the ladies, which he might probably be able to avert, but not yet decided how he should do so, as he was not acquainted with its extent, he left his hiding-place, when convinced that no one was near the tree, and went down to the river side, in the first instance, to see whether a boat or any other vessel lay there, and of what description it was. But he could see nothing, except one of the common, large, and clumsy flat boats, in which the farmers of the northern parts of the river carry their crops to the south, and which three or four of the farming men, with a hired pilot, simply take down with the stream, in order to sell their goods and the boat itself in the lower towns, and then return with the steamer home. Could the men whom he had heard talking under him belong to that?

The ferry now crossed from Bayou Sarah; in the excitement produced by his new discovery he had quite neglected the arrival of the steam-boat, which had, however, landed its passengers at the opposite town, and he went down to the bank to receive his expected friend.

This gentleman was a rich young Irishman, by name M'Neal, who also intended to purchase land in

this district, and was coming to spend a few weeks on Wildman's plantation, to examine the various plantations for sale. The ferry-boat had scarcely arrived at the floating pier, when the bell in the hotel was rung the second time for supper, and the two friends walked hurriedly on, not to arrive too late at table. Wildman had horses standing at the hotel to ride home after supper, as had been previously arranged; and though he now intended to remain in the ferry hotel, or at least in its vicinity, till he knew the two ladies were safe, still he was careful not to say anything to that effect, lest the men who had a design against their property might be induced to take further precautionary measures. He was now curious to see the face of the man whom he had heard speaking just before in the garden; and when he entered the supper room, his eye rapidly glanced over all the company, to see whether there were any familiar features. At this moment he saw the ladies entering through the opposite door, and forgetting all around, he was on the point of rushing up to them, and stretching out his hand—but gracious, no, that would not do, before all the strangers; and who knows how they would have received him? But how tall and beautiful Helen had grown! he would hardly have recognised her had it not been for the eyes, with which she had looked into his when a child, and which had been filled with tears the last time they parted, because they were never to see each other again.

He wanted to see if they would recognise him, and took his seat with M'Neal right opposite to them. He bowed to them, and they returned his salutation, but quite as strangers. Helen's eye was fixed on him

for a moment, but she did not recognise the playmate of her youth, whom the brown beard and dark curly hair, as well as sunburnt features, had so altered ; and how, too, should she expect to find in the Louisiana planter the poor farmer's lad, who had gone into service so many years back, and never been heard of again ?

" Trouble you for the bread, mister," a voice now said at his side ; and when he quickly turned his head in that direction he almost uttered a cry of surprise, for next to him sat - never in life would he have forgotten that sunburnt face, with the almost woolly black hair, the deeply set, crafty eyes, and the broad mouth with the pearl-white rows of teeth, even had not the terrible scar, which the villain had received across the forehead in the battle with the negroes, been still a more certain witness against him - Blighton, the former mate of the *Turtledove* : and that was the voice he had previously heard in the garden, and whose sound had summoned up the terrible scenes of his early life in all their fearful distinctness.

" Trouble you for the bread, mister," the stranger now repeated, rather impatiently, for the young man's earnest glance appeared to annoy him.

Frank had great difficulty in mastering himself, and handed him the bread with an apology ; his heart at the same time beat almost audibly, and he felt that the blood had deserted his cheeks ; but if the playmate of his youth had not recognised him, he need scarcely fear that from the man who had only seen him for a short time as a beardless lad, and perhaps did not remember his existence. But now he perfectly comprehended the danger in which the ladies were, if such a demon in human form had

fixed his greedy eyes upon them. A man to whom there was nothing sacred in this world, who had spent his life in blood and murder, was capable of everything, even the most horrible; and like lightning the thought crossed his mind, that he had heard them speaking of sufficient "boat's crew," so that he could no longer doubt but that these criminals had accomplices to assist them in pulling down the hotel if it were necessary. With a light boat they could have their booty so securely concealed in the pathless forests of the Mississippi, that the very slight police of the district would not be able to find it again.

He required, indeed, a considerable time to recover himself, and M'Neal was even surprised by his distracted manner; but, whispering a few words to him, Frank begged him to follow as if accidentally into the verandah after supper, and then turned again to his right-hand neighbour and commenced conversation with perfect calmness. This was not difficult, for though his former mate had at first regarded him with some distrust, he now appeared disposed to converse with him, in the hope of finding out, as Frank speedily discovered, whether he intended to pass the night here or go over to Bayou Sarah with the last ferry-boat. He naturally told him what he had probably already learned from the ostler, that he meant to ride home after supper, or at least before bed-time, as his plantation was only a few miles up the stream.

"And the other gentleman?"

"Will accompany me, of course; you'll find room enough here," Wildman added with a smile.

"Oh, didn't mean that, mister, at all," the sailor exclaimed hurriedly, as he laid one of his broad

muscular hands on his neighbour's arm, "I only ask for the sake of company; I don't like sitting alone of nights in an hotel, and my brandy tastes twice as well when I have some one to drink with. No, mister—mister—what's your name?"

"*Wildman*," the young man replied; and the English pronunciation of the word rendered it easier for him to maintain his incognito with respect to the ladies, as he did not dare, from being so well known here, to give a false name.

"Oh, Mr. *Wildman*," the mate said, confidently; "I knew a *Wildman* in Virginia."

"My family belongs there," the young planter said to confirm him in his error; "you've come down the river, I suppose?"

"Yes; from the north, and I want to see how trade is at New Orleans."

"How many tons can a flat boat like that carry?" *Wildman* now asked, to find out indirectly whether Blighton belonged to the boat that lay in the river, and that it was his crew that had been referred to.

"How do you know I'm in a flat boat?" the other asked, looking up sharply at him.

"Didn't you say so just now?" *Wildman* asked calmly; "then I must have been mistaken. So you're taking your goods down in a steamer?"

"I? no," the sailor said, with some embarrassment; "I have no goods—what I said about trade referred to something else. Times are very bad just now, and folks ought to be glad when they've nothing to sell. Indian corn doesn't fetch in New Orleans what it costs in Ohio, and the poor flat-boatmen are starving. But

—by the way,” he then said in a lower tone, ‘and bending over to Frank, “what gentleman is that opposite? Does he belong to the ladies?”’

“Oh, dear, no!” the young man whispered in reply; “that’s a new doctor, who has come across: he lives below Taylor’s plantation.”

“Down below here?”

“Yes; I believe that the ladies have no male companions with them;” Wildman added, who desired to make the villain secure.

“Excepting a nigger,” the mate remarked.

“Yes, a negro,” the young man replied; “but the ladies are leaving the table.” And at the same time, and almost involuntarily, he also rose to reply to the gentle and polite bow of the ladies as they retired.

His neighbour now followed his example, and taking his accomplice by the arm, who had not spoken a single word during supper, he led him to the bar, whispering as he went, behind which the little creole had again taken his place, and asked for two brandies for himself and his comrade.

“Halloo, mister!” he then exclaimed, remembering his companion at table, “won’t you drink with us? but where is he—gone yet?”

“You mean Mr. Wildman?” asked the bar-keeper.

“*Wildman*, yes; where is he?”

“He is probably gone out to look after his horse,” the little creole replied; “would you like cigars?”

“No, thankye,” said the seaman, taking his nigger-head from his pocket, and biting off a piece. “By the way, young man,” he then added, turning to the creole, “can we have a couple of beds here to-night?”

"Certainly, gentlemen, why not?" was the satisfactory reply.—"in one room?"

"Of course, and I should like it a little high up—at least, not down here," said the sailor; "the mosquitoes are not so troublesome upstairs."

"Bah! mosquitoes," laughed the creole; "you'll sleep under a net, and there's no room up stairs, as one portion of the floor is not used for sleeping apartments, and the rest is occupied by the strange ladies."

"And who sleeps down here?"

"No one, gentlemen; we three shall occupy the whole floor alone."

"But what will become of all the other people who supped with us?" Blighton asked incredulously, for it really seemed as if everything turned out *too* favourably for his scheme. The creole soon removed his doubts, for according to his statement, the guests all resided in the vicinity, and either crossed with the last ferry-boat back to Bayou Sarah, or rode to their own plantations. He added, "They frequently come down to the hotel, either to hear the news from New Orleans, or to play a game of whist or euchre, and only spend the night at the hotel when they have missed the boat, or have drunk so much that they cannot keep in the saddle."

This was the report the stranger received, and ordering the bar-keeper to have their beds ready by the time they returned, the two men left the house and the garden, at whose gate they remained standing, and after looking round them cautiously, walked down to the river bank.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE NIGHT ATTACK, AND WHAT THE NIGGER
THOUGHT OF IT.

Frank's scheme to defeat the robbers. The mate sets to work at once. The waiter is silenced. The ascent of the stairs. The nigger on the watch. Frank to the rescue. The attack. The pirates are defeated and taken prisoners.

BUT they had not been unwatched, for Wildman and McNeal were standing on the road, just opposite the boat, in the deep shade of a leafy Pecan tree, overgrown with grey moss. Frank had told his friend hurriedly of his suspicions, and they now wished to convince themselves whether Blighton and his comrade really belonged to this boat, and expected assistance from it.

"And what now?" McNeal whispered, when the two had disappeared on board the boat; "I wish I was a mouse, to overhear their consultation."

"We don't need it," Wildman said, seizing his arm, and leading him a little way across the meadow behind them, in order that any watch on board the boat might not see they were observing it. "I know that the villains have determined on getting possession of the widow's money this very night; it is a matter of perfect indifference to them *how*, for they run the same risk whether they commit a murder or not. At any rate, they will let some of their comrades into the hotel, for they will first attempt to settle the negro alone, and fly with the money; but if that don't suc-

ceed, they will cut their way to their boat, which is probably held only by a single rope, and so escape."

"And your plan?" asked McNeal.

"It is as follows," the young German hastily replied. "We must first of all leave the hotel together on horseback; but then you'll ride at full speed to the judge, and beg him, in my name, to send back the constable and a warrant for this Blighton's arrest, the former mate of a notorious pirate, as well as to seize the boat lying here, on board which explanations of a good many things will probably be found. See that you knock up some of our neighbours, and bring them to help; we cannot be too many, for, if all is as I fear, we may expect a furious resistance on their part."

"And where will you remain in the mean time?" asked the young Irishman.

"I know every corner in the house," Wildman replied. "I'll put up my horse at Harper's, and come back across the fields. The little room where the creole sleeps is always open; I'll creep in at the window there, wake him, and keep guard till you come; but, for Heaven's sake, make haste, for the villains might set to work sooner than we anticipate. Whatever I can do to delay their attack, I will—and now, to work."

And with these words they again entered the courtyard, where Wildman ordered their horses to be brought out, and wrote a couple of lines in the little bar to the judge, which McNeal was to deliver, and mounted with his friend at the very moment that Blighton and his comrade returned from the boat, and stopped to speak to them.

"Halloo, mister!" cried the mate to his former table companion, "on board already? I thought that

we were going to drink a glass together, and you were off like a shot !”

“Thank ye, thank ye,” Wildman replied, as he seized the reins; “we’ve a long road before us, and it’s getting late. Good night, gentlemen !” And driving the spurs into his horse’s flanks, he flew along the smooth, level road, which ran along close by the side of the Mississippi, and was only separated from it by an embankment.

The two sailors remained stationary, and looked after them, till the echo of their horses’ hoofs had died away in the distance; and Blighton’s comrade growled after them—

“Good night, eh? At any rate it’s a good beginning that you two are under way.”

Blighton shook his head, and said gloomily—

“Devil take the scoundrel, his face don’t please me; and I’ve seen those large blue eyes somewhere before. Yes, and worse still, they’ve seen me, too, but the devil knows where; and their owner doesn’t appear to remember, either. But he started when he first saw my face, and who knows if we shouldn’t have doctored up an old acquaintance if we had remained much longer together?”

“Well, at any rate they’re off,” said the other, “and it’s a question whether you’ll ever see them again.”

“I shouldn’t wish it to one of us, after what will happen to-night,” growled Blighton; “but I don’t trust the fellow exactly, even now, though he had got on horseback ten times and ridden off; his first surprise was too evident, and he had a great deal too much to say to the young Paddy afterwards.”

“You don’t really imagine he has any idea of our plan for to-night?” the other sailor hurriedly asked.

"Not that," laughed Blighton, "or he wouldn't have been such a fool as to ride off, when, if we have any luck, we shall have finished our task in an hour. But he can come again to-morrow morning, and if he has any suspicions now, what he sees then will confirm them. But, what matter," he added, with a hoarse laugh, and turned to re-enter the house, "he'll find the nest empty and the birds flown. Still, I'd like to know where I really saw those big blue eyes."

In the hotel all seemed still very busy; the guests were playing cards at several tables, and the creole had enough to do in serving them with the spirits and wines they called for. Blighton, however, who appeared to be carelessly lounging from one table to the other, employed his time in making himself acquainted, as far as he could, with the arrangements of the house. He even took a light and walked upstairs, where, however, the negro soon appeared, and on his stating that he was looking for the room he had occupied a week before, the negro told him that all the rooms were engaged, and that he would have to content himself with one on the ground floor.

"Halloo, mister, what did you want up there?" the creole asked him, meeting him at the foot of the stairs when he came down; "I told you all the up-stair rooms were engaged."

"Oh, hang it," the sailor muttered, "I was so full of thought, that I walked upstairs with the light, till the nigger's black face came across my bows."

"Do you want to go to bed?" the creole asked.

"Yes, presently; but I'm still too thirsty: give me first a couple of brandies warm, that'll make me sleep all the better."

It would have been against the waiter's interest to contradict such an assertion, but the ringing of the glasses summoned him to the other end of the room, and he was forced to leave the extraordinary guest to his own devices.

Quite in accordance with Blighton's wishes, the gamblers did not feel disposed to remain late this evening at the hotel; it was not yet ten o'clock, and the last had already mounted their horses, and started homewards. The negro lad, who assisted in waiting, put out the lights, and left the house, in order to go over to the negro cabin, situated across the court. The crew of the flat boat also appeared to be very busy; they were pulling in their cable, and pushing off from land into the river. "Halloo, whither away so late?" one of the horsemen shouted to them, "you're in a precious hurry."

"Go to the devil!" was the polite reply of the boatmen, and they laid themselves at the same time on their creaking sweeps, to get the boat free from a little promontory that jutted out near them.

"I should like to know why the fellows are getting underway at this time of night," said one rider to the other, as they galloped down the river-bank.

"The moon's just rising," the other said, however, "and they probably want to take advantage of it; by to-morrow's dawn, they could get a long way down the river."

As the boat retired further from the shore, and disappeared in the darkness, the sounds of the horses' hoofs died away, as they hurried home; but close under the bank lay the vessel's jolly-boat, manned by four men, who had taken in their oars, and did not betray their presence by the slightest sound.

In the hotel all had become quiet, and the tired creole seemed to wish his guests also a-bed.

"Gentlemen, if you wish to go to bed," he at last addressed the two men, who had probably only awaited his own departure, "this is your room;" and he opened a door on the left hand. The room contained five beds, of which two were intended for the strangers, the others were unoccupied.

"But we haven't had our night-cap yet, Willis," Blighton said with a laugh, and removed his quid from his mouth, in expectation of the coming enjoyment.

"I have already locked up the bar," said the young fellow.

"Will it be too much trouble to turn a key, and so earn another quarter dollar," growled Blighton; "I take brandy, that I may not forget old habits."

The creole took his key out of his pocket again with a rather angry countenance, and gave the two strangers the required draught. He then locked up again, and went, with a "Good night, gentlemen," into his own little room, which was just opposite to theirs, and separated by a corridor.

Blighton took the light, and went with his comrade into their sleeping-room, but it was only a pretence. Deep silence reigned in the whole house, and the two criminals extinguished their light, and gently opened the door, to commence their unholy work.

"Shall we wait till the creole sleeps?" whispered Willis in his comrade's ear, "or set to work at once?"

"I would rather he was asleep," the reply was given with equal caution, "if I was not afraid we should waste too much time; but as we can't tell how long the affair up aloft will take us, we had better s t

to work at once. I will creep up to the door, and you can then call him ; when he wakes, I'll make sure of him."

"But no unnecessary bloodshed," said Willis, laying his hand on his comrade's arm ; "you are accustomed to it from your sea-faring life, and you get bodies out of the way there easily enough ; but here they leave awkward stains, which are unpleasant, and frequently useless witnesses."

"But it's always the safest," Blighton remarked.

"No, no," said Willis, anxiously ; "only make him harmless ; it is much easier working, when we know that we haven't the noose always over our heads."

"Humbug !" Blighton hissed ; "but I don't care ; you'll have to answer for it, if the young villain gets us into a mess. Safe is safe ;" and then he crept in his stockings to the opposite door. Willis then opened his own, and called the lad. No reply ; he called again—all was quiet. Blighton listened, but could not hear the slightest sound.

"Confusion !" he muttered to himself ; "the scoundrel can't have smelt a rat, and jumped out of window ?" He laid his hand gently on the latch, and opened the door as cautiously as possible, but when he listened, a demoniac smile crossed his features. The wearied lad had taken off his clothes, and then thrown himself on the bed, where he slept gently and soundly, and the robber crept up and leant over him.

Willis had followed him there, and after a couple of whispered words, they suddenly threw themselves upon him, so that the sleeper, ere he was able to wake, or even understand what was being done to him, lay securely gagged, and firmly bound in his bed, so that he could neither move, nor utter the slightest cry.

The creole defended himself at first with all his strength, for, thus aroused from his first sleep, he reasonably expected the worst; but he was in hands much too practised and certain, and all his struggling was of no further use than to wear him out, and at last he gave himself up passively to his fate.

Blighton watched him carefully, and for that purpose opened the window-shutter just above his head. When the prisoner lay quiet, he turned away from him, and said to his companion:—

“He’ll do for the present; but still, it is not the safest way, and I only hope we mayn’t have to repent it. Do you stop here and listen awhile, whether all remains quiet, and I’ll creep upstairs, and see what is to be done with the nigger.”

“You won’t be able to conquer him alone,” Willis warned him, “and, in the end, he’ll alarm the whole house.”

“Leave that to me,” said Blighton; “keep a clear path for me down here, and I’ll manage the rest. Are the fellows at their posts?”

“George attended to that; they are waiting under the tulip-tree at the door for the appointed signal; the door is open.”

“Good; then we need not fear for our own safety, for if we miss our mark, which is now very improbable, they cannot prevent our escape with the couple of niggers in the house, so take care!” and leaving his comrade, he crept like a snake over the passage towards the stairs, whose turnings he had already carefully noted, and crawled rather than walked upstairs.

But here he had to contend with an accident, which detained him longer than he expected. Some of the stairs creaked, and he could only trust his weight on

them with the greatest caution, lest he might awaken the negro, and so utterly ruin their so carefully-designed scheme. Only very slowly, and waiting for a while after every creak, to listen whether anything was stirring, he at last reached the landing, and the little ante-room, where he had seen the negro's camp-bed previously. His dark lantern, which he had brought with him, he left, however, on the top stair, for the stream of light might have betrayed him too soon, and he now listened for the regular breathing of the sleeper.

It was all silent ; not a sound reached his ear, with the exception of the nibbling teeth of a mouse, which was gnawing the skirting-board.

Could the negro be awake ? Blighton stopped for nearly a quarter of an hour, to convince himself of the fact. At last he heard the gentle respiration of some sleeper—it reached his ear at regular intervals—and then all again was quiet, till it recommenced, and now he must really be asleep, for the breathing became loud and nasal : and Blighton drew his heavy knife with a triumphant smile, and felt his way to the bed.

Gracious, how the fellow snored—Willis must hear it below—and such long pauses intervening, that it quite gave him a start, when it began again. He slept like a bear—but all the better, and the assassin raised his lantern, which he now fancied he could safely use, and glided quickly, though still very cautiously, towards the bed of the nigger, who must be put out of the way before anything could be done. The door of the ladies' room would then be broken open in a second, and with a gleaming knife before their eyes, they would give up the money-box without hesitation. Blighton had managed worse affairs than

this, and laughed savagely to himself, when he thought how famously everything was going on.

But the robber was mistaken in one respect, for though he had set about the execution of his project, much sooner than Wildman had imagined possible, still Blighton erred with respect to the nigger, who was not asleep at his post, as he fancied, but had heard the creaking of the first step, and had his suspicions aroused by it. The black was by no means defenceless, for a heavy bowie-knife lay under his pillow, and seizing this, he calmly awaited the approach of the robber, who, he did not the least doubt, would bolt directly he saw he was detected: he could not have the slightest idea of the actual danger which hovered over himself and his two ladies, for he was not aware of the character of the man with whom he had to deal.

Thus he lay till Blighton reached the landing and stopped to catch the breathing of the sleeper; but when all remained quiet, and the negro remarked what the nightly visitor was waiting for, he determined to entice the thief, by pretending to be asleep. In this he was perfectly successful, and gliding behind the bed and rolling his thick woollen blanket round his left arm, to guard off a stab or cut, he held the sharp weapon in his right hand, and quietly awaited the approach of the enemy.

Cautiously, but with clenched teeth, the robber approached the bed, from which he fancied the regular breathing reached his ear—he had now come so close, that he could feel the bedstead. He gently stretched out his hand, and his fingers touched the mattress. He had reached his destination, and advancing one step farther, he opened the dark lantern, and—found a pair of large glistening eyes, under which two rows

of brilliantly white teeth were grinningly displayed—fixed upon him, from the other side of the bed.

“Halloo, Massa!” the negro cried at the same moment, who fancied he had recognised in the sudden flash the man who had paid him a visit once before that night. “What! you here again—looking for a bed? ah! ah! fie Massa, fie,—sneak away now like a drowned dog—fie, Massa!”

But Scipio was mistaken in fancying that the detected robber would sneak away abashed, for though Blighton had closed the lantern again, on seeing the negro’s watchful eye opposite him, he only did it to give Willis the appointed signal to join him.

But the light whistle had scarcely echoed through the empty house, before the faithful negro, who now perceived that he would have to do with more than one assailant, and then would not be able to repel their attack, bounded over the bed and tried to master the thief. Fortunately, he had the woollen blanket still round his arm, for Blighton scarce perceived his enemy rushing on him, than he made a desperate stab at him, and would have run the broad sharp blade most assuredly into his body, had not the point been caught in the soft elastic folds of the wool. Scipio, however, scarce felt the blow than he involuntarily clutched at the arm to prevent a repetition of it, and thus let his own weapon fall. But being of immense strength, he seized the robber in his arms, and he succeeded at least in knocking the weapon out of his hand, and it fell close to the stairs. Blighton, repeating the summons to his comrade, threw himself furiously on the negro, and hurling him to the ground by the exertion of his whole strength, he tried, though in vain, to grasp the knife, which had

fallen from his grasp, and so put a speedy and sanguinary end to the fight. The negro writhed under his grasp, and also shouted for help.

Steps were heard bounding up the stairs.

"Quick, Willis, quick!" the robber said; "give me your knife to cut this shouting villain's throat. Here."

"Where?" said the voice, and an arm was stretched out to feel the combatants.

"Here's my hand!" said Blighton.

"And there's mine!" was the reply, accompanied by a blow, which hurled the robber senseless to the ground.

It was Wildman instead of the expected Willis, who had arrived opportunely to help the threatened negro, and though he had returned at full speed from Harper's, he had arrived all but too late to avert misfortune from the beings he so dearly loved.

When he approached the house carefully and hoped to enter unperceived, he found the place under the window occupied by one of the boat's crew, who had lain down here on watch, and did not appear inclined to rise without some special inducement. Gliding cautiously back, he re-entered the bushes, mounted the tree, and let himself down from it on to the hedge, to approach the house from another side. Crawling on the outside, he noticed that the flat boat had left its place, and gliding down to the bank, he perceived in the shade of the little group of pecan trees, the boat, which lay fastened with a cord, and unguarded. He now quickly understood the stratagem of the men, who had got rid of the clumsy flat boat, and intended to pull after it when they had

effected the robbery: if he cut off their escape he would consequently have the villains in his power. The loss of time, too, would not be much, and gliding down by means of the roots of the tree, he soon reached the water's edge and the boat.

A hurried cut with his knife severed the thin cord, he pushed the boat out into the river, and he soon had the satisfaction of seeing it drift rapidly after down the stream. But, in doing this, many precious moments had been lost, and hurrying back across the road to another part of the garden, he soon reached the window of the room in which the creole slept. The window was not fastened, the shutter was wide open, and climbing on a cask that stood beneath it, he soon entered the room.

"Jean, Jean!" he whispered, and shook the boy, "Jean, what on earth is the matter with you?"

The poor boy writhed on his bed, but the tightly-fastened cords did not give way; and Wildman, passing his hand over the boy's face, immediately felt the gag, and now knew that the robbers had commenced their task so far successfully. The blood ran icily through his veins;—what had taken place, and had he after all arrived too late? But he soon conquered every other feeling when action was needed, and feeling for the cord, he soon cut it through with his knife. A few seconds later the creole was free, but Wildman's hand was on his mouth, and clutching more firmly his loaded stick, he gently opened the door. He listened—all was silent,—when suddenly a low whistle was heard from above, and he was hurrying towards the stairs, when a voice cried to him:—

"Here, Tom or Bill; up with you, quick—it's time!"

"I see it!" Frank replied, and making a blow in

the dark at the speaker, which levelled him to the ground, he reached the stair-head in a few bounds, just in time to help the negro.

But with this the victory was far from being gained, for the whistle, as well as the subsequent noise, was heard only too clearly by the sailors waiting without, who entered the house, but could not immediately find the stairs.

"To the landing, to the landing!" the negro cried at this moment, hearing the voices below, and after all that had occurred, naturally inferred that it was a reinforcement for the robbers; "we may be able to keep the ground till help comes." Feeling for his knife in great alarm, he picked up the robber's instead, and dragged his bedstead and mattress across the stair-head, just at the moment when the four sailors were hastening up to the assistance of their comrade.

"Confusion!" they shouted, however, on perceiving the resistance that awaited them here, while the little creole was yelling ten thousand murders in the yard. For a moment, they hesitated whether they should risk the attack or not; but Blighton was in the hands of the enemy, and should they leave him to be executed, while it was still in their power to save him?

"Forwards!" shouted one of the band, and firing his pistol at the negro, he followed the bullet immediately in order to force his way through. Scipio was wounded, but he held his ground, and Frank struck the assailant across the temples, just as the three others rushed upon him simultaneously.

"Surround the house; hurrah, my boys, we have them!" a voice was heard shouting in the street, and the stamping of horses also reached their ears.

"The devil!" the assailants yelled, and stood motionless from terror. But Scipio, seizing the opportunity, lifted the mattress and threw it on the assailants, who fell backwards down the stairs. Two escaped the fall, and sought to fly, while the negro seized the third; but the neighbours had drawn themselves up round the house, by direction of the constables, and prevented any chance of escape. Willis alone, on recovering from the stunning blow he had received, sprang across the road, and succeeded in reaching the bank where he knew the boat lay; but Wildman's precaution had cut off this mode of escape, and a quarter of an hour later, the captured robbers lay bound in the verandah, guarded by the constables.

CHAPTER XXIX.

IN WHICH OUR STORY ENDS, OF COURSE, VERY
HAPPILY.

Frank makes himself known to the mate. The ladies return him their thanks. Frank finds that Helen has not forgotten him after all. Retribution. Our hero receives the reward of his perseverance.

A MESSENGER who had been sent to the magistrate returned with that gentleman before breakfast time, and the prisoners were handed over to the sheriff, to be kept in the adjacent prison till their trial came on.

Just as they were being led away, Wildman walked up to the fettered mate, who had recovered from the blow, and standing before him with folded arms, he said, looking fiercely at him:—

"And you don't recognise me, comrade?"

"Comrade?" shouted the pirate, and looked savagely in the flashing blue eyes of the young man. "Comrade?"—he was uncomfortable, for the stranger knew more of him than he liked: but he shook his head, and growled—

"A lot of scamps go about the world, who are very like one another—I don't know you."

"And has Mr. Blighton really forgotten his old steward?"

The robber started as if a serpent had stung him, and his eye was fixed for a moment in horror on the features of the young German. And now, indeed, for the first time, a thought of flight seemed to strike him, for he looked round wildly, and tore at his bonds: but the constable tapped him laughingly on the shoulder, and said, shaking his head:—

"Useless trouble, my lad, those cords will hold, and if they don't suit you, you can soon have a better one. And now, off with you; you have poisoned the air here long enough, for the ladies are coming, and we will not spoil their enjoyment of the beautiful morning by seeing your scoundrel face—be off with you!"

The prisoners were led away, to be punished soon after, Blighton by hanging, and the others by imprisonment. The magistrate had, in the meanwhile, explained to the ladies the imminent danger they had been in during the night, and assured them that they had to thank solely the cautious and bold behaviour of a young German planter, for saving their property, perhaps their life. Scipio, who had only been slightly wounded in the arm, informed them also of his own preservation by his means, and the ladies could scarce wait for his arrival to express their gratitude.

But there were a great many people in the verandah, and they begged the judge to call him into the house.

Frank Wildman obeyed the summons with a beating heart: the hour had now arrived which he had longed for during so many years; it was such a glorious moment, for he could regard himself as the saviour of these dear beings, and yet he was afraid of recognition; he feared a meeting, which only shortly before he would gladly have purchased with all he called his own.

"Honoured sir," the elder lady began, when he approached them, and Helen blushing deeply went to meet him, not with cold words, but with a warm pressure of the hand, to thank him for their preservation—"Honoured sir, we owe you, a perfect stranger, such gratitude for your conduct this night, that I really do not know how to express it."

"And am I really so utterly unknown to you?" the young German stammered, as he seized the young lady's offered hand—"Cannot you really remember me, Mrs. Wolfram—Miss Helen?"

"Bless my soul!" said the old lady, and regarded him with surprise—"I really cannot remember."

Helen felt that the hand, resting in hers, trembled, and she only required one glance, and the blood which had so recently suffused her cheeks now poured back to her heart as she gently whispered:—

"Frank Wildman!"

"Frank Wildman!" the old lady repeated, with really unbounded surprise—"Frank Wildman, why, bless my soul! our old dear Frank!" and drawing the young man to her, she fell on his neck, and, kissed and embraced him, as if he were still the boy whom she had learned to love in his childhood,

whose hard lot she had so often mourned, and whom she had lamented as dead, when she heard nothing more about him, and fancied he must have perished.

The worthy old lady had ever been a mother to him, and Wildman's tears also flowed unrestrained : he was not ashamed of them—they were tears of joy.

Mrs. Wolfram would not suffer the young man to leave her again, and he was obliged to tell them all that had happened to him since their parting. Ah ! she knew the sin her deceased husband had committed, and ~~how~~ it had been Frank's inheritance to which they owed all their riches, for an evil conscience had not suffered the old man to die, without having lightened his heart in some measure by confessing it to his wife. But the time had now arrived, when there was at least a possibility of requiting him for a portion of what he had so innocently suffered, and she seemed quite resolute not to let it pass.

But where could I find words to describe the happiness of our young friend ? It was a happy, blessed era, which commenced from this day.

All the suffering and misfortune he had endured in the long, tedious years, were forgotten : forgotten too was the pain, which had so frequently contracted his heart, when he thought that he was to end his days alone and friendless. The object was gained, for which he had striven faithfully and boldly with his brave, courageous heart ; the beloved beings, the only ones left him on the wide world, were standing healthy and happy before him, and were uttering words of affection which sounded so strange, and yet so dear to his ear, and a new life lay before him, a life full of light and happiness, and sunshine, which he had hitherto fancied would never dawn for him.

Madame Wolfram, however, did *not* go with her daughter to New Orleans, as she had intended on the previous day, and still less to Germany, whither she had proposed to return.

On the very same day she spoke openly and clearly with the young man, about the occurrences at his former home which forced him to leave the Hudson ; confessed herself to be heavily indebted to him, and declared herself most gladly prepared to repay him honestly as far as lay in her power, and could be effected by means of money and maternal affection. She was never wearied of telling the newly recovered friend, who had made her still more his debtor by his bold deed, how happy this would render her.

But Frank, too, was happy ; he did not require money—his home was already prepared ; and a few months later, he conducted the playmate of his youth, as his loving bride, to his plantation on the Atchafalaya ; and the Wildman family was regarded, not only among the richest, but also the most respected and beloved of all in the wide and magnificent Valley of the Mississippi.

